

ORIGINAL  
LETTERS,  
FAMILIAR,  
MORAL *and* CRITICAL

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By Mr. DENNIS.

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VOLUME *the* SECOND.

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ORIGINAL

LETTERS



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ADVERTISEMENT to the  
READER concerning the fol-  
lowing LETTER.

THE following Letter was writ by me about sixteen Years ago. But that the Reader may enter into it with the greater Ease, and be the better entertain'd with it, it will be convenient to lay before him the Occasion upon which it was writ. It was towards the end of the last Century that Mr. Collier publish'd a Book call'd, A short View of the Prophaness and Immorality of the English Stage; in which Book, tho' there were several Things true in particular, yet the Author was manifestly so unfair an Adversary in general, that the latter End of the Book very grossly contradicted the beginning of it, and endeavour'd to decry even a Regulated Stage, which the Author at the beginning of the Book had acknowledg'd useful. About four or five Years after that, as near as I can remember, Mr. Collier took occasion from the great Storm, which happen'd about that Time, to renew his Attack

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upon

*upon the Stage, in a little Pamphlet call'd, A Dissuasive from the Play-House, written by way of Letter to a Person of Quality. Which Pamphlet, upon the Fast Day that was order'd to be kept by publick Authority immediately after that Tempest, was given to People gratis as they came out of the Churches. The Design of it was to make the great Storm a Judgment upon the Nation for the Enormities of our Theatres. The Hypocrisie was here so flagrant and so absurd and extravagant, that it rais'd either the Indignation or Mirth of all discerning Men of Integrity. At the same time it had a wonderful Influence upon the Weak and the Hypocrites; and there was a great Outcry against the Stage; so great a one, that there was a warm Report about the Town, that it had been twice debated in Council, whether the Theatres should be shut up or continued. Then it was that I could bear no longer, but as I had before defended a regulated Stage against the Author's Attack in his Short View, I was resolv'd to expose the Hypocrisie, the Extravagance and the Sophistry of his Dissuasive. This Resolution produced the following Letter, which I call'd the Person of Quality's Answer to Mr. Collier's Letter; and which was intended to consist of a Mixture of Reason and Raillery, and which was most agreeably receiv'd by some of the best Judges who were then*



then in England, and particularly by the late Duke of Buckingham, the late Earl of Halifax, and the present Lord Lansdown. As this Letter has been so long out of Print, that it is as scarce as any Manuscript of which there is but one Copy, I thought it might be as new and as entertaining to most of its Readers as if it had been never publish'd. There remains one thing more with which I must acquaint the Reader, and that is, that I, who have all my Life-time abhor'd Hypocrisie, and scorn'd to pass for any thing which I am not, tho' in the Title Page I call the Letter the Person of Quality's Answer, have yet taken care in the Body of the Letter to acquaint the Reader, that I am only a private Gentleman. But I make no doubt but that I am a much more considerable Person than he to whom Mr. Collier's Letter was writ, who perhaps was no Body.





THE  
 Person of Quality's ANSWER  
 TO  
 Mr. COLLIER'S LETTER:

*Containing a Defence of a Regulated  
 Stage.*

*Dear Doctor,*

Lincolns-Inn-Fields,  
 Jan. the 1<sup>st</sup>.

**T**HIS Afternoon, I receiv'd your Edifying, Evangelical *Dissuasive*; for which, What Thanks can I return you? What Recompence can be sufficient? May he, for whose sake you did it, amply reward you.

*I had conceived indeed a Zealous concern at the Disorders of the Play-House, I lamented its having so much the ascendant of the Town, and the Countenance of Figure and Fortune. And I too justly presaged that these Nurseries of Licerse and Atheism, especially*

pecially that in our Neighbourhood, wou'd, if unrestrain'd, prove fatal to the Nation; make us ripe for Destruction, and pull down some terrible Vengeance on our Heads; no less than Popery, or Arbitrary Power at the least; and, dear Doctor, what a Day, and what a Sight wou'd that be to you and me?

For this Reason, I resolv'd that, in my Family, Reformation and the Year should begin together; and for that Reason I call'd them together as soon as they had dined to-day, determining to read a long and a solemn Lecture out of your *Short View* to them; but a strange Fatality had happen'd; for some audacious Rats had so prophane-ly gnawn it, that it was no longer legible; a Detachment, in my Conscience, of Play-House Vermin, whom the Devil had enter'd into for that purpose, at his Congregation in the Neighbourhood.

Thus bilk'd of my Homily, I thought I must, to my great Grief, have been forced to dismiss my Flock. For I perceiv'd they were grown *frightfully Nice and Impatient*, and were resolv'd to be cur'd extempore or not at all.

But then it was that in an auspicious Moment arriv'd your short, but Divine *Dis-suasive*. I read it over as it were in a Breath, while they all the while stood gaping to entertain it. But the last incom-parable

parable Paragraph but one, I pronounced with a more emphatical Voice; laid before them with all the Energy of my Lungs, *the sad Instance of God's Judgment in the terrible Tempest, when we were almost swept into Chaos, when Nature seem'd to be in her last Agony, and the World seem'd ready to expire.* And what occasion, said I to my gaping Audience, to have Recourse to Tragedies, when those Rants, that Fustian, and that Bombast, with which deluded Mortals are now-a-days so tickled, are engagingly inserted into our very *Dissuasives*?

And here, Doctor, I made two Remarks to them, upon the Judgment of the late dreadful Tempest. For first, said I, the Outcries of the Play-House Practices are so aggravating, so horrible, that the Divine Vengeance which they brought down upon us, has invol'd the very Innocent. Not only the poor Inhabitants of *Cologne*, but the very *Hamburgers* and *Dantzickers*, and all the People of the *Baltick*, have suffer'd for the Enormities of our *English* Theatres; tho' I believe in my Conscience they never so much as heard of a Play, and know no more the Difference between a Tragedy and Comedy, than they do the Distance between the Earth and *Saturn*; so that, said I, you may observe from hence, 'tis not enough to keep away from these lewd Entertainments; but you must endeavour with



all your Might to suppress the Conventicles of Satan.

The second Observation that I made was this, that we have reason to be thankful to Heaven, for forbearing us so long. For if the late dreadful Judgment had happen'd in the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, when the Play-Houses were licentious in all their Impunity; when Reformation was so far from being thought of, that the very Name was despised and laugh'd at, what must the dismal Consequence not have been? Then we should certainly have been swallow'd up, since the *Judgment* was so terrible even the other Day, after a five Years Reformation?

What reason have we to be thankful, that we live in an Age in which Light is come into the World. For in what *Aegyptian* Darkness have we liv'd hitherto? And what a poor Reformation was that which was carried on in Queen *Elizabeth's* time, in Comparison of that which you are gloriously projecting? For with that former Reformation the Play-House began, grew up, and spread, and flourish'd. What a shadow of a Reformation was that? 'Tis true, Popery was driven out, and wholesome Laws were enacted to secure the Rights of the People. But what signified all that, when the Play-House was encouraged? For tho', as you learnedly observe,

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Play-Houses, in the Reign of that great Queen, were not permitted to be erected in the Liberties of the City, yet in the Suburbs they were not only permitted but encourag'd with a Vengeance; and by whom encourag'd? Why, not only by the People, but by the Court, nay, by the Council, yes, by those poor deluded Wretches *Cecil* and *Walsingham*, who believ'd it to be the Business, forsooth, of wise States-Men, to provide honest and reasonable Diversions for the People; and at the same time were so infatuated, so intoxicated, as to believe the Entertainments of the Theatre not only to be honest and reasonable, but the only honest and reasonable Diversions.

Nay, the poor mistaken Queen her self encouraged Play-Houses to that degree, that she not only commanded *Shakespeare* to write the Comedy of the *Merry Wives*, and to write it in ten Days time; so eager was she for the wicked Diversion; but ev'n with that Hand that wielded the Scepter descended poorly to translate a Play that was writ by a *Grecian* Poet. She had read, it seems, of some great Men among the *Romans*, who had shewn the way; as *Julius Caesar* had writ *Adrastus*; *Augustus*, *Ajax*; *Gracchus*, *Thiestes*; and *Mecenas*, *Oetavia*; and she wanted Judgment, alas, poor Woman, to distinguish between the Obligations of a Heathen and a Christian. 'Tis true

true she was wise enough in some things, she kept out Popery and Arbitrary Power, she defended us from *Rome* and *Spain*, by the meer Force of her Prudence. But what signified that, you know, Doctor, when she encourag'd the Play-Houses, and wanted Fore-sight in that particular, to presage that these Nurseries of Vice and Atheism wou'd prove fatal to the Nation?

It seems some Fools about her had told her, that at a time when Taxes were frequent and grievous, some honest Diversions would comfort the People, but that it would be unreasonable to deprive them at once of their Money, and of their Pleasure too; this she had been told, and she like an easie Woman believ'd it. But what amazes me most is this, Doctor, that not only that Queen and her Council encouraged Plays, but not so much as one of the famous Prelates in her time said so much as a word against them. 'Tis true, the States-Men defended us against *Spain* very vigorously, and very effectually, and so did the Church-Men against the *Roman* See; but alas their poor and narrow Spirits contented themselves with that. But not so much as one word was said against the Abominations of the Play-Houses. There were Reformers indeed! Were they so senseless that they wanted Discernment to see the *flaming and Outragious Wickedness* of them?

Or

Or so very wicked that they wanted Zeal to discharge their Duty in suppressing them? Ah my dear Doctor, had you but liv'd in those Times, you wou'd have taught that Queen her Lesson, in loyal Libels have told her her Duty, affronted her Authority, defam'd her Servants, and boldly have told her that she countenanc'd them only to debauch her People. You would have open'd the Eyes of those Fools, who believ'd *Shakespeare* to be Instructive as well as Innocent. You would have extracted more *Smutt* from his Comedies, than a Chimney does from Seacoal. And what Prophaness and Blasphemy had you not found in his Tragedies? You would have satisfy'd both Queen, and Council, and Clergy too, that their Business was to suppress the Play-Houses, and to let *Spain* and *Rome* alone. That the Danger that they were in was not from *Philip* the Second, and *Sixtus* the Fifth; but from Tyrants who had been many a Year defunct, from *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*; you would have presaged the Storm that the latter would have pull'd down upon the Nation, a hundred Years after 'twas writ. You had then been *Histrion Mastix* the first, whereas you are now but the second of that glorious Name; and then had old bungling *Pryn* been cropt for presuming to copy you. Thus, my dear Doctor, we have reason to believe what  
you



you would have done, from what we behold you do. For tho' Popery and Slavery are at our Doors, and each Moment are rushing in upon us; and nothing but the Wisdom of one Woman stands between us and them, yet you still retain your commendable Passive Principle, appear as unconcern'd as if you had sworn to be a Foe to neither, are found to be as little alarm'd for the Church, as if you had thrown off its Cause, as you have cast off its Habit; and instead of crying out Slavery, Popery, do nothing but cry out the Play-House, the Play-House, with as much Fury as if you were afraid it should contribute to the keeping them out.

But my dear Doctor, by the leave of your Modesty, I must exalt your Glory to a higher Pitch. When Queen *Elizabeth* died, King *James* succeeded her; and among the eminent Reformers of his Reign there was no talk of the Stage. Nay, on the contrary, to their Shame be it spoken, that King and his Court appear'd to be infinitely delighted with Plays. And in his Visits to the two Universities, Plays were the chief of his Entertainment. But what would we have, Doctor? as the Education is, so is the Youth. And he had been tutor'd by old *George*, a notorious Reformer, but a notorious Playwright. For the Sot believ'd, it seems, that the *Drama* could contribute to the Reformation of Mankind.

To



To King *James* succeeded King *Charles* the First; and then arose another famous Reformer, *John Milton* by Name, who not only left a Tragedy behind him, the Story of which he impiously borrow'd from the Bible, written, to leave him without Excuse, in his mature, nay declining Years, but has left a fine Encomium on *Shakespeare*; has shewn an extraordinary Esteem for *Johnson*; and among all the Things that he thought fit to reform, so far had Prejudice laid hold of his Understanding, it never so much as came into his Head that the Stage was one of them.

But then about that time, Doctor, there arose a Reformer indeed, Brother *Pryn* of Illustrious Memory; a Person indeed of an *amazing* Boldness. For to the Fervency of his furious Spirit, Ruine and Reformation were all one. With these Zealot's Thoughts he set about reforming the Church as well as the Stage; and by preparing the Downfal of one made way for the Ruine of the other. 'Tis true, he lost some part of himself in the Cause. But happy the Ears that were so lost! How much happier than those that stand pricking up daily at the Ribaldry of our Modern Comedies? I know, dear Doctor, under the Rose, that you have the same Design, and that you will never leave off writing as long as there is left either a Prelate or Poet in *England*;  
or

or if you do condescend to admit of Bishops, you will at least suffer no such Bishops as have a Tang of the Stage; I mean no swearing, prophane Bishops, but such whose meek and Christian Communication is only Yea and Nay.

As you have the same noble Design, may you find better Fortune, as you well deserve. For he, my dear Doctor, was but a Type of your more excellent self, tho' indeed an illustrious Type. And he but anticipated in a cold and a gloomy way, the very things that Fate had designed to be said with Fire and Flame by you. He indeed overthrew but for a time the Church and Stage together. But may you with a more propitious Fate——. But hold!—— No Man, you know, is able to tell into whose Hands a Letter may fall.

Thus, Doctor, the blessed Work of Reformation went on; and down went the Bishops and the Stage together; but after they had lain for some time in the Dust, were restor'd together, and with them the banish'd King.

And there are not People wanting, who believe, that the restoring the Stage, was one of the Motives to the restoring the banish'd King; for, say they, the People of *England* were at last grown weary of a nasty, gloomy, sullen, Fanatical Government, and began to long for their Pleasures. How,  
my

my dear Doctor? The restoring the Stage was one of the Motives to restoring the banish'd King? Ah, my dear Doctor, if you had but flourish'd in that auspicious Juncture! How happy would you have esteem'd your self to have been the Instrument of suppressing the Stage, only on purpose to see it restor'd with such a glorious Attendant?

Well! the King, the Bishops, and the Stage were restored together, and a long time flourish'd together, without any talk of reforming the Play-Houses, much less of suppressing them. For the merry Ministers of that happy Prince laugh'd at a Reformation. And even the foremost Ministers of the Church at that time, among whom were certainly some of the greatest Men that the Christian World has produc'd, appear'd by no means to be so terribly alarm'd at the Entertainments of the Stage.

You your self, I remember, Doctor, were then at Years of Discretion; and yet with passive Ears and Tongue, endur'd the Filth of *Epsom Wells*, the Bawdy of the *Soldier's Fortune*, and the Beastliness of *Limber-Ham*. But the time of your Prophetick Mission it seems was not yet come, or perhaps you thought it improper to fall out with the Play-Houses, before you had fallen out with the Government. But you have at last, to the wonder of the World, declar'd your self,



self, and we may say of you what *Lucretius* said of his ador'd *Epicurus*, Pardon the Comparison, I beseech you, Doctor,

*That you in Wit surpass Mankind as far,  
As does the Midday Sun, the Midnight Star.*

For what in the beginning of the Reformation was never seen, neither by *Jewell*, nor *Ridley*, nor *Cranmer*, nor *Latimer*; nor was afterwards hardly so much as thought of by the judicious, the penetrating, the sagacious *Hooker*; nor what in this latter end of it, (as under the Rose we sweetly hope Doctor) has not been found out neither by *Wilkins* nor *Tillotson*, who have shown so much Understanding and so much Judgment; as well by the Force of their invincible Arguments, as of their clear, chaste, noble, and masculine Styles; What none of these have been able to find, you have plainly convinc'd the World of; that the Play-House would bring all to Ruin; O Miracle of boundless Sagacity! O Prodigy of Penetration! The late Archbishop was certainly a Man of as undoubted Probity, of as much Integrity, as ever liv'd in the World; nor was his Zeal and his Boldness in the Cause of Virtue less; witness that noble, that intrepid Spirit, with which he appear'd against Popery, even in the most dangerous times, when the Jesuits us'd  
sharp



sharp decisive Arguments, and made nothing of cutting a Man's Throat out of Zeal to confute his Doctrine; the late Archbishop, I say, Doctor, who had so much Boldness, as well as Zeal and Integrity, and who in the late Reign had so much Power; never saw this dreadful Danger from Plays, which you have so plainly discover'd. \* For if he had seen it, he would have prevail'd upon the late Queen to suppress them. He either foresaw none of this Danger, or if he did, the good mistaken Man thought there would be more in going about to prevent it. An infallible Sign that he wanted your Fore-sight and your Sagacity. He look'd upon himself to be indispensably bound in a double Respect to reform the Corruptions of the times. For he was both Head of the Church, and first Counsellor of State. And no Man knew better than that judicious Prelate, that Corruptions of Manners are most pernicious both to Church and State. And no Man ever discover'd more Zeal for the present Establishment both in Church and State. And yet poor Man, with all his Understanding, and all his Zeal, he was so far deluded in this Particular, that he never medled

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\* There is something in the Eleventh Volume of his Sermons against Plays, which I had not seen when this was writ: but Mr. Collier has prevaricated vilely in the Quotation.

meddled with these Nurseries of License and Atheism. As many admirable Sermons as he left behind him, against the Vices and the Errors of the Times; I believe you will hardly find that he has mentioned the Play-Houses with Bitterness in them all. He left that part of Reformation for your sublimer Prudence, and more Heroick Charity. Indeed the Concern that he had himself both in Church and State was so apparent, that perhaps he might fear that a violent Endeavour to reform our Theatres in him might look like Interest; and might perhaps imagine that the Work would be kindlier received, if it were carried on by one who cared not a Farthing either for Church or State.

And here, Doctor, give me leave to admire the Glory, or to speak in your own Diviner Language, the *Meridian Blaze of your mysterious Charity*. 'Tis of an amazing Size and Brightness, and our weak Eyes are dazled at it. For that you, dear Doctor, who appear so extremely nice and scrupulous, that you dare not so much as take an Oath to defend our Sovereign Lady and us, against our Mortal Enemies; you who are so over cautious that you dare not so much as hold any Communion with us, that you should take up this extream Concern for our Souls, that you should be so violent for our Salvation, is beyond Expression

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pression wonderful. When I consider that all who are engaged by Duty, are either dumb or very cold in the matter, while you are declaiming with so much Fervour, with so much Zeal, against the Disorders of our Theatres, you who have nothing to do with the Matter; I can never sufficiently admire the Excess of your Zeal, which is too high and too heavenly to be comprehended by a Mortal.

I can only say, that 'tis a thousand pities 'tis confin'd to so narrow a Sphere. But, alas! good Man, it is none of your Fault that it is not more universal. For we have reason to be sensible, that if you were not restrain'd by the Apprehension of brutal and beastly Force, you would not fail to declaim with the same Heat and the same Bitterness against both Church and State.

This amazing Brightness of your Charity, has drawn upon you the Envy of some good Men; has made you become the Hatred of Libertines, and the Jest and Scorn of Buffoons. I, Doctor, am your Champion against them all; and I have many a bickering in your Behalf, even with my moderate Friends; who are indeed for reforming the Licentiousness of the Stage, but are by no means for a Suppression of the Play-Houses. Mr. Collier, says one of them, is too severe. He does not consider the Times that we live in. These are not



the Primitive Apostolical Times, but the last and corrupt Ages of the World. The Capital of a great Kingdom must have Meetings for publick Pleasure. If Mr. *Collier* is for pulling down Plays; let him name a more harmless and reasonable Diversion to be establish'd in the room of them. What, would he have us always at our Devotion? Or does he expect that we should be all devout? Would he have Devotion a Mode and Fashion, as it is in *France*? where the Rake is as devout as the Archbishop, the Whore-master as the Monk, and the most inconsiderable Punk at *Versailles*, as the most glorious *Madam de Maintenon*. 'Tis true, said he, there are things in some of our Plays that I could heartily wish were out, but Mr. *Collier* is too rigid, too harsh, and out of all measure severe. He does not bear with the least Faults, and seems to have no Indulgence for Human Frailty. Thus, Doctor, you were attack'd the other Day by a Friend of mine, and you shall see how I defended you.

Lord, Sir, says I, you are the most mistaken Man in the World. Mr. *Collier* is no such Person as you imagine. He is a good-natur'd, sweet temper'd Man as lives, and will bear as far as any Man whatever. And as for your saying that he has no Indulgence for Human Frailty, why 'tis a sign that you don't know him. 'Tis true, he has taken a fatal Aversion to the Play-

House; and he will down with it. We have all of us an Aversion for something or other. And why should you be so much concern'd for that *Rendezvous of Rakes and Strumpets*? But yet Mr. Collier has Indulgence enough for them too, any where but in the Play-House. And where's the mighty Hardship then upon them? Are there no places for them to assemble at, but there? Are there not Taverns, Brandy-Shops, Coffee-Houses, Chocolate-Houses, Gaming-Houses for the Rakes; and Indian-Houses, Musick-Houses, Bawdy-Houses, either for Strumpets solitary, or Strumpets and Rakes in Conjunction according as they please? Has Mr. Collier writ one Word for five Years together against any of these Places? For Godf sake what do you call want of Indulgence then? Is not every Coffee-House in Town grown a Gaming-House? May not we go every Hour of the Day into several of them, and see and hear twenty fellows swearing and blaspheming, and one surrounded by that horrid Crew,

*Shaking with bloody Oaths the Box,  
And calling upon Plague and Pox  
T' assist him?*

Why, there they may swear and be damn'd for all Mr. Collier. He troubles himself with swearing no where but in the Play-House?

House? But what do you mean by Human Frailty? When People are wicked in earnest that's something. He has nothing to say against such. But to be vicious in Jest, to play the fool with the Devil, to counterfeite Sin forsooth on pretence of decrying it, why these are *dreadful Provocations*, *this is flaming and outrageous Wickedness*; and Wickedness which he is positively and absolutely resolv'd that he will not endure.

Come, come, says he, I begin to be sensible of the Matter. Mr. *Collier* is now declining in Years; and the Affairs of the World go not according to his Wishes: And Age and Disappointments have sower'd his Blood, and made him lose the relish of Sports and gay Diversions. Once more, said I, you are the most mistaken Man in the World; Mr. *Collier* is far from being a Foe to the gayest Sports and Pastimes; but then he is for having those who frequent them take the Consent and Approbation of the *Nonjuring* Clergy along with them, who you know are *Persons of Sobriety and Conduct*. He'll tell you, that the Sports that good Bishop *Laud* appointed for the Sabbath, were not only safe but commendable. That for Example, Cricket when it came to be so recommended, immediately became Canonical, Foot-ball Orthodox, and Juggle-Cat *Jure Divino*. But for the Layety to be so impertinent as to

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chuse Diversions for themselves; and particularly for the Ladies to believe that they have Capacities enough to judge between right and wrong, and to distinguish Decency from what is not *Decorum*, he takes to be an Enormity that is never to be allow'd of in any Christian Country.

The Play-House, said I, is one of those Diversions which Mr. *Collier* believes to be too luscious a Pastime for the Layety. To see and to read Plays, he thinks is enough for one of his establish'd Virtue. And it must be own'd, that he has read or seen more than any Person in *Christendom*. As for the Layety, less vigorous Diversions may serve them. The Men may take a Game at Bowls in the Summer, and a Game at Whisk in the Winter. The Women in Winter may visit their grave Relations, and in Summer Evenings may take a Boat to cool themselves. \* For as for the *Park*, he says, that is a place that is *too much frequented by Rakes and Strumpets*. He does not mean, he says, that all the Company there are so; but this he may affirm, he says, that scarce any Quarter is sometimes so plentifully stock'd. Now who, says Mr. *Collier*, would trust his Health in a Place of Mortality, or go to the Pesthouse for Recreation? Thus Mr. *Collier*, like a Person

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\* The same Company for the most that frequents the *Park* frequents the Play-House.

of Conduct and Sobriety, treats the Layety with the same Circumspection, that a *Romish* Priest does his Congregation at high Mass, who only delivers the Wafer to the People, and reserves the Wine for himself.

But, Doctor, I had almost forgot one Thing, that I urg'd among the rest in your Defence, and that was the Reason why you stick so close to the Play-House, and let some other flaming Vices alone, which he was pleas'd to enumerate; and that was, that you took this way of proceeding, to be laying the Ax to the Devilish Root of the accursed Branches, that the Play-House was the undoubted Cause of all the Iniquity in the Nation; and that if we could but down with that, a sudden Reformation would follow among all sorts of People. That Porters would no longer be drunk with Belch. That vigorous Captains would be tilting no more at handsome Drawers in Taverns. That losing Gamesters would no more Blaspheme: And my Lady *Dabcheek's* Basset Bank would be immediately broke.

These are the things that I have said in your behalf to several of the Enemies of your *Short View* and *Defence*. I now come to tell you what has happen'd upon the receiving your *Dissuasive*; tho' 'tis scarce three Hours since its Arrival. Immediately upon the reading it, my eldest Son *Jack* told me that he was perfectly satisfied that

Plays were abominable; and taking his Hat, his Sword and his Cloak, went away for St. *James's*. My eldest Daughter *Susan* is gone to take a Walk in the Garden, to meditate there in the dark; that she may have the Arguments in Readiness, by which she says she designs to convert her Sister. But my younger Son *Charles* made some Objections, and so did my Daughter *Harriet*, which I here send you as well as I can recollect them; because I know, Doctor, that you are able to answer them better than I can.

Sir, says *Charles*, I have promis'd my Lady *Freelove* to Day, to wait upon her to the Play, and so has my Sister *Harriet*; but for the future I promise you to keep away, and so I dare say will my Sister, if you will but answer some Objections that we have to make against Mr. *Collier's* Discourses.

I know no Reason, why Mr. *Collier* should pretend to meddle with our Diversions. If he is really offended at Plays himself, in the name of God let him keep away, I know no body who is fond of his Company there. But since we don't pretend to oblige him to come, why should he presume to oblige us to keep away?

If Mr. *Collier* is really offended at Play-Houses, I would fain know how long he has been so, or what is the Reason that he did not write against them when he was young:



young: For the Stage was really then more licentious than it is now. Since he forbore writing against them till he was old, we humbly desire that we may not leave them till we are old. And then perhaps we may have some natural or some politick Considerations that may oblige us to rail as much as he does.

How comes this Man to take up so much Concern for us? Is it Christian Charity, and a tender Care for our Souls? I would fain ask him one Question, Is not true Religion that which is chiefly necessary for the Salvation of Souls? If he says it is, why then let me ask him another Question: Is the Religion which we of the present establish'd Church of *England* profess the true one, or is it not? If it is, why does not he hold Communion with us? If it is not, why does not he set us right? Has he a Concern for our Souls, or not? If he has, why does he not mind the main thing? If he has not, why does he pretend to make us uneasie, and set us together by the Ears about Trifles?

Is it a Concern for the State that makes him take up his Pen? because perhaps he believes that the Corruptions of the Stage may prove of dangerous Consequence to the Government. But if he has that extream Concern for it, Why does he not take an Oath to be true to it? Why does he not Abjure the Gentleman who dwells at St.

*Ger-*

*Germain*s? He believes us Schismaticks, and he believes us Rebels, and takes no Notice of the Matter. But if we talk of going to a Play, the Man's Zeal grows flaming and outrageous upon it. Certainly his is a very nice, and very extraordinary Charity!

But if he is offended at Plays, so much as he pretends, why does he see them, why does he read them so much? Why should he be so ridiculously conceited, and so spiritually proud, as to think that he can stand under Temptations, under which we must fall?

If he has so much Aversion for Plays as he pretends, if they are so very horrible, why has he read so many, why has he done Evil that Good may come of it? If he really loves them, and they are not so abominable, Why has he writ against them? If he has writ against Plays that he loves, How comes it that he says nothing against the Church and State which he hates?

What Reason can be given for that, unless that he waits for his Opportunity, which by setting us at Variance about Trifles, he hopes in some Measure to hasten; or unless, while in the Face of the World he is bombarding the Stage, he is diligently in private undermining the Church and the State?

In this Age of universal Toleration, when Nonsense of every Sort and Size is tolerat-  
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ed, not only that gloomy, fullen, lifeless Nonsense, which is to be heard at *Quakers* and *Anabaptist* Meetings; but that sparkling, spirited, fiery Fustian which is to be found in our *Dissuaves*; in an Age in which Schism it self is tolerated, Heresie is tolerated; nay, when Mr. *Collier's* Jacobite Congregation is tolerated; in this Age of universal Toleration for Hypocrisie and Nonsense, shall we suffer an Inquisition to be set up for Wit, and Sense and Pleasure?

We are willing to have all the Indulgence in the World, for the Errors and Frailties of our Fellow Creatures; and tho' we may believe some of them Schismatics, believe some of them Hereticks, yet we are not for reforming them against their Wills, nor saving them out of Malice. And we thought we might have hop'd, at least that the Government might have hop'd, that at the same time that it indulges some of them, not only in different ways of Worship, but ways which are disagreeable, and some of them prejudicial to it, and ways which neither are, nor were, nor ever will be tolerated in any other Kingdom of *Europe*; we thought, I say, that the Government might have hop'd that these very Persons would have born with a Diversion, which is establish'd by that, and which is not only protected by each of the Governments of  
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the most considerable Kingdoms in *Europe*, but which has had always the Allowance of publick Authority in the most flourishing Nations; and has been believed by them all to be the fittest Entertainment that can be allow'd by publick Authority. At a time when the Government has shewn so much Indulgence for them; might it not be expected that they should shew some Regard for that, and not demand with furious Clamours, the Suppression of an Entertainment, establish'd by its Authority? For are not these Clamours against the Queen whose Servants the Players are? Is it not her that they attack thro' them? And may not we reasonably fear, that as they begin this Reformation as they did that in Forty, so if they are suffer'd to go on, they will end it like that, and bring all things into Confusion.

Pray, Sir, consider, have we spent so much Blood and Treasure in the Defence of our Liberties, and shall we suffer an Inquisition to be set up for that which is the very Life and Soul of Liberty, and that is harmless Pleasure? for 'tis for harmless Pleasure we only contend. Let the Corruptions of the Stage be banish'd, but let the rest remain. Yet at the same time it must be allowed that it is not Mr. *Collier* who is a proper Judge of their Innocence or their Guilt. One would judge my Lord Chamberlain

berlain and the Master of the Revels have common Sense to distinguish right from wrong. Is Mr. *Collier* a Person fit to be appeal'd to from them? And shall we not dare to go to a Play till his License-Office is open? Shall we suffer our selves to be led by the Nose by a Declamator, till we are brought into such a Condition that we shall long for Slavery? How long shall we suffer Hypocrisie to pass upon us for exact and scrupulous Virtue, Tropes for Reason, and Foppish Affectation for fine Language?

Shall we not only suffer an Inquisition to be set up for Pleasure, but as it were by universal implicit consent permit his Disciples to set up themselves for Inquisitors? When the Government of *England* pretends to give no Laws to the People, but by vertue of their own Election, and their own Consent; Shall the Rabble erect themselves into Legislators, and presume to give Laws to the Queen her self, and all the Nobility and Gentry of *England*, whether they will or no?

What has Mr. *Collier* to do with our Diversions? Let him prove the Authority of his Mission to Preach up the abolishing of that heathen Invention a Play-House. Cannot we meet together in a Play-House, where we have no manner of Design upon Mr. *Collier*, without alarming him; and raising his Passions as he calls it to *Combustion*;

tion; when at the same time we have suffer'd him so long to meet in his separate Congregations, where we reasonably believe that he has a Design upon us. Certainly his is a pleasant Charity, who in the very Hour of Death can absolve an Impenitent Traytor, and damn a poor Fellow with Absolute Power only for going to the Play-House. What can he mean at this time of Day, when our Religion and Laws and Liberties are in the utmost Danger, from the Designs of *France* and *Rome* abroad, and a base perfidious Party at home, thus to divert Men from looking after their All, by scaring them with ridiculous Pre-fages from the Corruptions of the Stage? If Corruptions contrary to the Queen's Knowledge have crept into our Theatres, and Corruptions too enormous to be born by his scrupulous Virtue, why did he not, as his Loyalty oblig'd him to do, humbly Petition her Majesty to redress them, instead of making use of the Licentiousness of the Press, to raise seditious Clamours against her Conduct to the People?

It must be acknowledg'd there are Corruptions which are crept into our Theatres, for into what Human Inventions will not Corruptions creep, since it is plain that they insensibly creep into Religion which is of Divine Establishment; but 'twould be a monstrous Conclusion, that because of  
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the Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, reveal'd Religion ought to be suppressed, and Men to turn Deists or Atheists.

'Tis true, there are Passages in several of our Plays, which I could heartily wish were out. But neither do I see a quarter so many as Mr. *Collier* does, nor do I look upon those which I do see thro' his magnifying Opticks, The long View that he has taken of Smutt, as he very quaintly calls it, in his *short View of the Stage*, puts me in mind of a *Dutch Grotesque* that is at my Lady *Freelove's*; where there is an Antick Frier who has cast off his Frock, squinting thro' a Microscope at a wanton Nun who has thrown off her Petticoat. But Mr. *Collier* is mistaken, if he thinks that to discern some certain matters, he has need of a magnifying Glass. He has a Hawks, nay an Eagles Eye of his own at them; and I dare say, can see as clearly and as distinctly through two Petticoats and a Smock, as *Eustace Cummins*, of Immortal Memory, could swear through a two Inch Board.

'Tis very true, Sir, as I observed before, that there are several things in our Comedies which I could wish had been left out; and there are particularly some Bawdy Passages in them, which I wish the Authors had had more respect for the Audience in general, and for the Fair Sex in parti-

particular, than to have inserted in them. But does he think our Virtue so very weak, either the Ladies or the Gentlemens, that we cannot give them a transitory Hearing without being debauch'd by them, while his it seems is so very strong, that he can dwell for Months upon them, and make a full Collection of them, a Collection which has taught several of our Ladies more Bawdy in two Hours, than they could have learn'd in so many Years at the Play-House? Does he believe that no body ought to entertain them obscenely but himself? Or does he pretend to erect a Monopoly for Bawdy, to retail it to his Stationers as oft as his Occasions require? 'Tis true, there are Corruptions which have crept into our Theatres, and these Corruptions ought to be reformed; but therefore ought the Stage to be ruin'd? Is not the Corruption of the Stage an evident Proof of its original Goodness? since what is originally wicked never can be corrupted: But in what Human Conversation is there not Corruption?

Does Mr. *Collier* really believe that there is no swearing in Gaming-Houses? No Intrigues at *India* or Chocolate-Houses? No Lying, and no Sharping in Coffee-Houses? no beastly Lewdness at Musick-Houses, and Bawdy-Houses? If he believes that these Places are guilty of the Crimes imputed to them, Why does he not Preach to them, which

which have a great deal more Occasion for Reformation than the Play-House? For in most of them you have Venom without Preservative; but the Play-House carries, or should carry, the Antidote with the Poison. If Mr. Collier has seen any of these Places, as 'tis hard to believe that one of his Experience should not have been at some of them, methinks he should be convinc'd, that by correcting of them, he would begin with the Head, whereas now he but pleases and tickles Corruption, by catching Reformation by the Tail. A little common Sense may serve to convince a Man, that the reforming the Stage would never reform the Town; but the reforming the Town would certainly reform the Stage.

What is the Reason then that Mr. Collier, neglecting the Vices of the Town, keeps such a Bustle at those of the Stage? Why? because it is not his Design or Business to correct or reform any thing. His only Business is to set up himself. To erect an obscure Schismatical Parson into a Saint of the first Magnitude. To pass for a Man of more Sanctity than all the Bishops, and of more Discernment than all the Ministers of State. His Business is not to correct and reform, but to amuse, to puzzle, to make a Noise and a Party; to make the Stage the Apple of Dissention, to set us at untimely Variance at this dangerous Juncture.



Juncture. He has Experience enough of the World, to know that a Noise and a Party is not to be made by barely attacking of Vice. For by doing that he would oblige only the Virtuous. And, alas! they are but few; and a silent, a modest, and an humble Party. But by attacking the Stage, he obliges the Vitious too; and they are numerous, and pert, and arrogant, and noisie, and tumultuous. 'Tis true, the Virtuous are Enemies to the Vices and Corruptions of the Stage. But only the Guilty and the Hypocrites are Enemies to a Stage reform'd; because a Stage reform'd would be Enemies only to them. When Mr. Collier began to write his *short View*, he designed to oblige only the first; for in the beginning of that Book, his Intent is plainly to reform the Stage. But then afterwards he wisely consider'd, that the obliging the Virtuous would not do his Business. They are not enough to cry up their Champion, and bring him into Reputation. But if he appear'd an Enemy to the Stage it self, and attempted to destroy it instead of reforming it, why then he would oblige all the doubty Hectors in Virtue, a numerous Multitude of false Braves, who would infallibly stand Buff for him, and be his Bully Backs on occasion. He knew of old the Catalogue of those who were Enemies to Satyr, and he knew that all the

Enemies

Enemies to Satyr, were so to the *English* Stage.

*Sunt, quos genus hoc minime juvat, ut-  
pote plures*

*Culpari dignos. quemvis media eruet turba:  
Aut ob avaritiam, aut miserâ ambitione  
laborat.*

*Hic nuptarum insanit Amoribus, hic pue-  
rorum:*

*Hunc capit Argenti splendor: stupet Al-  
bius ære:*

*Hic mutat merces surgente à Sole ad eum,  
quo*

*Vespertina tepet regio: quin per mala  
præceps*

*Fertur, uti pulvis collectus turbine; ne quid  
Summa deperdat metuens, aut ampliet ut  
rem,*

*Omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas.*

I know, Sir, that you understand the Original very well, and therefore I will not pretend to interpret *Horace* to you literally, but I desire your leave to make some Observations upon him by way of Paraphrase, which will set his Sense in a clearer Light, and convince you of this important Truth, that all who would appear what they are not, are mortal Enemies to Comedy, because the Comick Poet is perpetually upon the hunt for Originals; and every one would

be glad to play the Fool or the Knave in quiet, without being singled from the Herd.

Sir, I shall at present trouble you but with two of these Characters of *Horace*, not only because I am sensible that I begin to tire you, but for Reasons which I shall hint to you anon; but those two Characters I desire that I may set before you with the same Additions, with which Time has transmitted them to us, and by altering them made them modern.

The First is he, *Qui ob avaritiam laborat*. A gogling, snarling, groaning, praying Rogue; though at the same time an Usurer and an Extortioner; a Fellow so notoriously given to cheating, that he defrauds even himself of Necessaries; who can dine on a Prayer, as Sir *John Denham* says, and sup on an Exhortation; one who makes a Stalking-Horse of Religion, and lies sculking behind it with no other Purpose than to draw Wild-Geese within his Reach.

The other, Sir, is he; *Qui mutat merces*, &c. A biggotted Stock-Jobber, or a Fanatick Monopolizer, a Fellow that devoutly calls up his Family to Repetition on *Sundays*, and as devoutly makes them his Tools to smuggle and cheat the Queen on the Week-Days. A Person who will stick at no manner of Villany, but is kindly contented to be damn'd, only that his great boobily Boy may get half a dozen Claps,  
half



half a score Surfeits, lose half his Estate at the Groom-Porters, be cheated of the other half by Sharpers who are Under Spur-Leathers, and jog on to the Devil a little more gayly than his Father. In the mean time this good-natur'd Father leads a most exemplary Life. In the Morning while his Servants are busie at the Water-side, he walks about the City to pull down Play-Bills, cheat those who deal with him, to cause all the Beggars that he finds in his way to be whip'd, tho' at that very time he is going to augment the Number of them; to visit Watch-Men, Headboroughs and Petty-Constables, and charge them that if they find any handsome Whore upon their Watch, they should bring her to him the next Morning; and least the Constable or the Watch should have a wambling to her themselves, for such things he remembers have been formerly done, he reads a long Lecture to them against Concupiscence, and then goes home and gravely dines with his Family. The Afternoon he passes in walking from Tavern to Tavern, in which he drinks above twenty Nipperkins, in as many several Kitchens, to see that there is no Swearing nor no Prophaness there, but that People, as he thinks it behoves good Christians, get devoutly and religiously drunk; still growing more and more inflam'd with Canary and Zeal, and being full of them

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both,

both, he is oblig'd at last to disembody himself, which he does of each, by spewing and preaching in turns. And after he has thus performed his Duty to the Publick; and fortified himself for the better Performance of private Duties, he goes home like a good Man, to fast and pray with his Family: I say to fast, Sir, not out of Covetousness or Superstition, but that he may secure the Chastity of his Daughters by mortifying the Old Man in them, and the Youths of his Family.

But, Sir, by your shaking your Head, and your biting your Lip, I am to believe you mistake me. I am not here for making a Satyr upon the City. I know very well that this City is the only true and solid Foundation of the *English* Strength. Nor am I such a Fool as to believe that Sense or Honour are confined to Place. I am my self acquainted with a great many Citizens, who are very estimable Members of the Commonwealth; I know several among them who are not only Men of Sense and Honour, but of Wit and Pleasantry. I know several of them, whose true Zeal for Religion is shewn by all that engaging Charity, that attractive Humility, and lovely Meekness, which are the only Signs of a good Christian. And for such true Christians, whether they may belong to the Church or Meeting-House, no Man has a greater

greater Respect than I have; who judge of Mens Devotion, not by the Errors of their Understandings, but by the Sincerity of their Hearts. But every Hypocrite, to talk in Mr. Collier's extraordinary Dialect, is the Displeasure and Disease of my Eyes. I hunt him, as *Boileau* says, as a Dog does his Game, and as soon as ever I smell him, I bark immediately. And, with Submission to you, Sir, I believe I am in the right of it; and that the Hypocrites in Christian Warfare ought to be more severely handled, than a Strumpet or a Libertine, as we treat an open declar'd Enemy less rigorously than a Spy. That the number of Hypocrites in the City is very great, the Men of true Devotion there will be the first to acknowledge. 'Tis to the Level of them that Mr. Collier has particularly writ: Every thing in his *short View*, his *Defence*, and his *Dis-suasive* appears to be adapted to them; the Sophistry of his Deductions, the equivocating and prevaricating of his Citations, the Finicalness of his Language, and the Pharisical Arrogance of his Zeal. By gairing of these he knew he should compass both the Ends, for the which he writ. The first of which was, that he should engage a numerous Party to make a Noise and to bully for him; of which he did not fail.

For it is notoriously known, that in the late Reign, several Persons of the foremen-



tion'd Stamp, who pretended to meet together for the support of the Laws and the Government, discharg'd their Malice in a publick manner against several Gentlemen of known Loyalty and *English* Principles; only that they might do an acceptable thing to a Man whom they knew to be a mortal Enemy to the present Establishment.

The other End that Mr. *Collier* probably propos'd to himself, by exasperating the noisie and clamorous Part of the City against the Theatres, might be to animate them against the People of Quality whose Presence supports them, and the Court whose Authority protects them. That this is no chimerical Conjecture, may be thought by any one who takes a short View of Mr. *Collier's* Principles. For from this Proceeding he might easily foresee one of these two Consequences. For upon these Clamours and Outcries, either the Play-Houses would be suppress'd, or they would be protected. If they were suppress'd, he easily saw the Gentry would be disoblig'd, and that would be a pretty handsome Step towards some farther Reformations and Alterations. But if upon these Clamours they were not suppress'd, why then he had a great deal of Reason to hope that the City would grow fullen and sower. And if their being out of Humour was of such dangerous Consequence in the Days of Brother

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*Pryn* of blessed Memory, when the Court appear'd to have so little Occasion for them; he believ'd that it might be of greater Moment now, when he knew that by the Necessity of the Times, the Court was oblig'd to demand their Assistance frequently.

Sir, you have often told me with extream Goodness, that you requir'd no Obedience to any Commands that you laid upon us, if they did not appear to be reasonable; because God himself, you have been pleased to tell us, required only our reasonable Service. But, Sir, can you believe it reasonable, that I should be of another Man's Opinion against my own Sentiments, when it appears so plainly that he is not of his own? For, Sir, can any thing be more evident than that *Mr. Collier* is moved to write against the Stage by another Motive than that which he pretends? His Motive perhaps may be human Policy, but it can never be Charity; or perhaps 'tis Spleen, or Covetousness, or Pride, or Arrogance, or Fear. I say Fear, Sir. For has not *Mr. Collier* Reason to apprehend the Stage as well as Hypocrites of the foremention'd Characters? For is it not evident, that at the same time that he is setting up for a First-Rate Reformer, he has shewn to the World, that he is but a Fifth-Rate Comedian? And while he pretends to condemn Acting upon the Stage, is Acting a Part upon

upon the Stage of the World so awkwardly and so ridiculously, that all who are furnish'd with common Sense have found it to be Comedy? For, whom does he pretend to reform? Is it not the People, as I observed before, whose Religion he abhors, and whose Government he hates? And does he not know very well, that by reforming our Manners, he would run Counter to his own Designs and Wishes? because Reformation of Manners would confirm the present Establishment both in Church and State; and can he then really design to reform us? But how does he propose to himself, to bring this about? Why, not by suppressing Vice, but the Stage, that scourges and exposes it. For he meddles not with that Vice that is in the World, let it be never so *flaming and outrageous*. For Example, the crying Sin of *England*, next to Hypocrisie, at this time, is Gaming; a Sin that is attended with several others, both among Men and Women, as Lying, Swearing, Perjury, Fraud, Quarrels, Murders, Fornication, Adultery. Has not Gaming done more Mischief in *England*, within these last five Years, than the Stage has done in Fifty? For when Women have lost vast Sums at Play, which they have been afraid to own to their Fathers or Husbands; have they not often been known to pay them after a shameful way? How can the most inveterate Big-

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got pretend that Gaming is fomented or encouraged by the Stage? Must he not on the contrary be obliged to own, that it is censur'd and corrected by it? What is the Reason then, that Mr. *Collier*, neglecting so important and so dangerous a Vice, against which no Body has said one Word, reserves all his Rage for the Play-House? And takes an Occasion from the late Tempest to threaten us with some terrible Vengeance from Heaven, if it is not immediately suppress'd. Can any thing be more ridiculous than this from him? For does not he wish for the greatest Vengeance that Heaven can send down upon us? Can any Vengeance be inflicted on a Protestant and Free People more terrible than Slavery and Idolatry? Is not the late Tempest, though dreadful in it self, yet a very Trifle compared to those? 'Tho' the late Storm should return, and Nature should once more appear to be in her last Agony, and the World be ready to expire; would not every one, who has Noble *English* Principles, chuse rather to see it perish, than to lose his Religion and his Liberty? Besides, Has the late Tempest any thing to do with the Business of the Play-House? What can Mr. *Collier* mean then by threatening us with terrible Vengeance, at the same time that he wishes it; and by engaging us in frivolous and groundless Dissentions, endeavours all that

that he can to bring it on us at the very time he pretends to avert it?

If Mr. *Collier's* Zeal were sincere; he would neither go about to frighten us with things, which it is plain that he is not afraid of; nor, neglecting more dangerous Crimes, would he attack the less. Besides, it is plain that he himself has not that Opinion of the Stage, into which he would fool and delude us. For if the Cause of the Stage were so bad as he would make us believe, or if it were out of Charity that he attack'd it, what need he make use of notorious Falshood to decry it? 'Tis a pleasant Charity that engages a Man to be damn'd himself to reform others. Besides, what Occasion has Truth to have Recourse to Falshood, which may sometimes indeed support Falshood, but must always to discerning Eyes render Truth suspected.

You know, Sir, that it is easie for me to prove, that in this short Letter address'd to you, Mr. *Collier* has Recourse to Falshood. For can any thing be more plain, even from the Artifice of his Address to you? Does not he here, to make the World believe that he has the *Countenance of Figure and Fortune*, Palm you upon the Town for a Person of Quality, who are only a private Gentleman?

If Mr. *Collier* is mov'd by Charity to exclaim thus loudly against the Stage, let me ask

ask him one Question, Who are the Persons whom he designs to reform? They who never come to a Play-House, methinks should have no Occasion for his Corrections. If his Design is on those who come thither, why does he not insinuate himself into their Affections, by the Meekness and Humility of his Expressions, and the attractive Language of Charity? Why has he Recourse to such presumptuous Arrogance, as justly renders him the Aversion of some, and the Scorn of others? With him, an Audience which you very well knew, Sir, is often one of the most venerable and awful Assemblies that can any where be found, is an Assembly of Rakes and Strumpets: Buffoons are the Poets, and the Players Libertines. Does he believe that such Language is proper to work upon these People, or to provoke them and exasperate them, and render them deaf to Argument and Persuasion?

Besides, there is something in Mr. Collier's Style with which Truth is almost incompatible, and that is Affectation, which is always false. Truth is plain, and simple, and natural, and, as she can have no Defect in her, is but hid by Ornament. 'Tis true, when we convey her to the Understanding by the Passions, we sometimes give her Ornament. But then that Ornament must be in Nature, and consequently true.



true. But Affectation is always false, and can no more consist with Truth than Darkness can with Light. What I have observed of Man in general, may be said of Writers, That Affectation is a certain Sign in them of want of Sincerity, or of Understanding, and very often of both.

But Mr. Collier's is the most affected, most foppish Style that ever I met with in Ancient or Modern Authors; of which I will undertake to convince any impartial Man, if he is but a tolerable Judge of Writing.

But to return from Words to Things: I have not time enough to display the perpetual Sophistry of his Inferences, or rather his no Inferences; for a Metaphor or an Allegory is with him an Argument, and so is often an Hyperbole. But I shall say a Word of his more than Jésuitical prevaricating in his Authorities. I shall only insist upon two, the one of which he brings from Old, and the other from Modern *Rome*.

Pray, Sir, let me see Mr. Collier's Letter: Ay, here the Authorities are.

*The Republick of Rome, before Julius Cæsar, stopt the building of a Theatre; being fully convinc'd, that this Diversion would bring in Foreign Vice, that the old Roman Virtue would be lost, and the Spirits of the People emasculated.*

To prove this, he refers his Reader to his *Defence of the short View*. That is, he endeavours to support the Sham which he puts upon the World now, by that which he put upon it five Years ago. 'Tis true, after all, Mr. *Collier* speaks the Truth here, but 'tis dash'd and brew'd with a Vengeance. 'Tis true, the *Romans* did stop the building of a Theatre, before the Time of *Cæsar*. But would he pass this upon us for one Act of the *Roman* People, or for their constant Sense? If for their constant Sense, their constant Practice proves that it was quite contrary. If for one Act, of what Validity can that possibly be against their constant Sense?

Is not Mr. *Collier* now a most shameful Hypocrite? For does not he know that the *Romans* had the highest Veneration for Plays imaginable? Is not every School-Boy who has read *Terence* convinc'd of it? Do not his Comedies tell us by their Titles that they were part of the Religion of that People? That they were all acted at their Funeral Ceremonies, or at the Festivals of their Gods?

That which he has said of Q. *Elizabeth* is another pious Fraud, a meer religious Banter. But I know that you, who are so well acquainted with the History of our Nation, must be already satisfied of it.

But

But the Pope has lately shut up the Theatres in *Italy*: Can any thing be more absurd than this? Has the Pope lately shut up the Bawdy-Houses? Or does he continue to lay a Tax upon Sin, and to give them Spiritual Licenses? 'Tis very certain he does. What then would Mr. *Collier* conclude from this, that the Government here ought to license Bawdy-Houses, and to suppress Play-Houses, because the Pope takes the same Method?

I think, Sir, I have made it plainly appear, that Mr. *Collier* is one who has Reason to be afraid of Theatres, and therefore to hate them. For he is one of those with a Vengeance who endeavour to appear what they are not. And tho' now-a-days a Priest is not suffer'd to be brought upon the Stage, yet I question whether he is to be regarded as a Priest, who wears a Sword of five Foot long, and a Peruke of three, and goes about reforming in the same Habit, in which the *French* Dragoons are at this very Juncture piously reforming the *Cevennois*.

Thus, Sir, I desire that I may have leave to continue to be a Friend to our Theatres, since I have clearly shewn that Mr. *Collier* is not from his Heart their Enemy; especially since I am convinc'd that the Play-Houses, with all their Immorality and with



all their Faults, may be instrumental to the reforming so profligate an Age as this.

Thus, Doctor, I have sent the sum of the Objections which were made by *Charles*, to which I desire your Answer, that the Boy, who is hot and opinionated, may not run on in his Error.

As soon as he had done, I took *Harriet* to task. Daughter, said I, you see the Case is very hard upon you and the rest of your Sex, for thus the Doctor puts it, *Either the Ladies are pleas'd with the Indecencies of the Stage, or they are not. If they are pleas'd, 'tis a hard Imputation on their Virtue. If they are not pleas'd, 'twill be enquir'd why they come there: For his Part, He confesses that he has not Logick enough to disengage you.*

While I spoke this, I perceived some great Alteration in her; you would have sworn, her Imagination had been shock'd, her Aversion put into a Fit, and that she underwent much Fatigue of Fancy and Morification. To speak more vulgarly, the blood began to spring up into her Face, her little Breasts began to heave, and she started a Frown that made her awful ev'n to me her Father. He wants Logick to disengage us, (said she, with a disdainful Air, after I had just repeated those very Words) why then he shall find that I have more than he has, and that I who have not  
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yet reach'd my seventeenth Year, am able to make a very just Apology in behalf of my self and all the Women of Condition in *England*, whom he has so basely affronted. Tho' we are not pleas'd with the Indecencies or Immoralities of Plays, yet notwithstanding that we frequent them, because some Diversion is absolutely necessary for us, and because perhaps ev'n modern Plays, with all the Faults imputed to them, are the most innocent of the Diversions which the Town affords.

The Diversions that the Town affords, are chiefly reduc'd to four, 1. Gaming, 2. Musick-Meetings. 3. Balls and Meetings for Dancing. 4. Going to Plays. Now of all these, I am apt to believe that Plays are the most innocent, for the following Reasons. They raise the Passions only to correct them, whereas the others raise 'em merely for the sake of inflaming them. The Plays, and more especially Tragedies, instruct us in Virtue, which the other Diversions do not. They improve us in lawful innocent Knowledge, which in some measure supplies the want of Education in our Sex. They form our Language, and polish our Minds, and so capacitate us, when we come to marry, to engage and endear our Husbands to us. For we every Day see that only Fools are constant long to Fools. Sir, in short, the Case is thus. Diversions the  
Ladies

Ladies of a great Metropolis must have. I have particulariz'd the several Diversions which this Town affords. All the Danger, and all the Temptation which this judicious Person supposes to be at the Play-House, are really in all the other Diversions, which have none of the Advantages that may be reap'd from Tragedies, for the Improvement either of our Virtue or Knowledge. Why then would this mighty Reformer have us leave Plays for them? Would he have us have no Diversion, or would he have us make choice of those which have the most Temptation?

True, Sir, there are Passages in some of our Plays, which I could heartily wish were out. But does he think the Virtue of the Ladies, who frequent Play-Houses, is so very weak, as to be o'erthrown by the Lucifousness, as he calls it, of a Scribler's *Double Entendre*? What, have so many great Examples as we find on the Stage, so many noble and generous Sentiments, so many accomplish'd Patterns of Virtue; have all these no manner of Power to rouze, to strengthen and inflame our Virtue; and shall two or three wretched Equivocals, three or four miserable *Double Entendres* have the force to corrupt us?

If any of my Sex happen to find themselves so infirm, as this worthy Reformer appears to own that he is; if two or three ridiculous



diculous double meanings have Strength enough to undo them, in spite of those exalted Heroick Characters, which in my Opinion should be enough to fix our Affections to that degree, that nothing that we meet with abroad in the World should have the Power to move us; if any of my Sex are so infirm, let them, in God's Name, keep away from our Theatres. But I find no such scandalous Weakness about me. I can despise a Fool who thinks to entertain me with his sordid playing on Words; but at the same time can be entertain'd with Wit and good Sense, and more with the Innocence of true writ Humour; and I can be both pleas'd and mov'd with the excellent Scenes of an Instructive Tragedy: Does this judicious Person really believe, that the Conversations which we find in the World are Virtue and Purity all? The Food of the Mind, like that of the Body, is not all of it fit for Nourishment. But strong Virtue, like strong Nature, knows how to discern and separate, to reject the Bad, to assimilate the Good, by which it is fed and supported. If any of my Sex have the scandalous Weakness to have their Virtue and their Honour endanger'd by the Folly of *Double Entendres*, I would advise them to take their leaves of the Play-House. But at the same time I would advise Mr. Collier to persuade his noble Patrons of the Re-

Reforming Club to erect a Protestant Nunnery for them, for nothing less can secure them. For they who are found so strangely weak as to be warm'd by a meer painted Fire, how can they ever stand against the real Flames of Love?

How many extraordinary Women may *England* boast of, since Plays were introduc'd among us? Among whom are three of the greatest Queens that ever the World produc'd; and all of them took delight in Plays: How many Ladies of inferior Rank have frequented, and still frequent 'em, who yet in Proportion are fam'd for every Virtue? What does this charitable Person believe of our Mothers, our Aunts and Grandmothers? Does he believe them Adulteresses all, because they frequented the Play-House? But you, Sir, have Justice to believe better. You knew my Mother true to your Bed, as she was dear to your Arms. And I beseech you to have the Goodness to believe, that tho' like her I frequent our Theatres, I will be always Heir to her Virtue, as I am to her Likeness.

This, Doctor, was the Sum of what *Harriet* said before she went to the Play. News is just now brought me that she is come back from that horrid Place, and is gone with *Charles* to my Lady *Freeloves*, and that her Ladyship has sent for me—

T 3

Ah,

Ah, dear Doctor, let me see you To-morrow, to receive some Consolation from you. For here have happen'd two of the most unfortunate things in the World. For News is brought me from *Piccadilly* that *Jack* has lost a thousand Pound at Picket; and *Susan* who went into the Garden forsooth to meditate, tho' she went out as black as a Raven, being in Mourning for her Great Aunt, yet, as I hope for Mercy, the Jade is return'd as white and as powder'd as if she had been hard at work in a Bolting-House. So that I could wish that for this one Night they had both been with *Harriet* and with *Charles* at the Tabernacle of the Wicked.

*I am, Dear Doctor,*

*Yours, &c.*

## P O S T S C R I P T.

SINCE I writ this, I have seen a Letter written by you, tho' without Name, to Mrs.— She designs to return you an Answer as soon as some little Affairs will give her leave. In the mean while she says, that in the hurry in which your Letter seems



to be writ, you overlook'd the first part of the Passage which you quoted from Doctor Tillotson, and therefore she desir'd me to transcribe it, and to send it you with this; which, in Obedience to her Commands, I have done, and it is as follows. Tillot. *Serm.* Vol. II. *To speak against them (viz. Plays) in general, may be thought too Severe, and that which the present Age cannot so well brook, and would not perhaps be so just and reasonable, because it is very possible they might be so fram'd, and governed by such Rules, as not only to be innocently diverting, but instructing and useful; to put some Vices and Follies out of Countenance, which cannot perhaps be so decently reprov'd, nor so effectually expos'd and corrected any other way,*



T O

*Mr.* H U N G E R F O R D.*S I R,*

**I** Desire you not to give your self the Trouble to send any Boat from the Country to-morrow for your Humble Servant. If I find my self in a Condition to make you a Visit, I will rise betimes in the Morning and walk. But I am afraid to venture the cold of the Water so early in the Morning. Next to the cold of the Water I dread the Heat after I come on Shore. I dread the Company which you too often keep there who are apt to be excessively warm in a false and foolish Cause.

If any one has a mind to be satisfy'd of this, he need only repair to a certain Mansion, where they meet about three times a Week to endeavour to talk wisely together and where they never fail to discover greater Weakness than they were capable of when they were Boys. For which of them when they were but ten Years of Age would

would not have chosen at any time to have plaid, rather than to have been under the Lash at School? It was Nature's Voice that made them prefer gay Liberty to mournful Slavery. When they were Boys it was with great Reluctance that they were obedient to Age and Gravity, that govern'd them for their Good; and now the Sots are growing old, they long to have a Younger who will certainly ruine them, for their absolute Master. They are every Day endeavouring to prove that they are Beasts, and belong to that Younger as his unalienable and indefeasible Chattels, that he has even a Right Divine, that is a Commission sign'd by God, to use them like errant Dogs; not like *English* Bull-Dogs, for they are generous Creatures, and will fly in the Face of any one who dares to use them ill; but like errant Spaniels, who the more they are beaten the more they crouch and the more they fawn upon their Tyrannick Masters. I will say nothing of the Business concerning which you wrote to me till I wait on you, and am

London,  
March 18. 1714.

*Your, &c.*

T O



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T O

Mr. R \* \* \*

*S I R,*

**I** Desire that you would give your self no trouble about the drinking Quaker. For I find upon Reflection, that since I voluntarily gave up the Note, 'tis below me to demand the Debt.

'Tis true indeed, the Note was given up when there was little Hope of his paying the Money; and he has now, beyond all Expectation, an Estate left him. 'Tis true likewise, that the Money was lent in his pressing Necessity, and lent in order to do him a signal Kindness, which it actually did; and 'tis as true that I, who lent him the Money, had often before and have often since, both fed him hungry and cloath'd him naked. The Note was given up with a Promise that he should pay the Money if ever he came to be able; for which I then told him, that I depended on his Honour and his Integrity. But notwithstanding all this, if he has not one Spark of Conscience

science or common Honesty, which may oblige him to pay this Money of his own Accord, I ought to have Generosity enough not to demand the Debt. 'Tis true, this would vex some People in my Case. But I consider that perhaps the poor Wretch cannot help it, for as 'tis in my Nature to oblige, 'tis in his to be ungrateful. But then on the other side, as 'tis in his Nature to know no Friend, to own no Benefactor, and to serve no God but Interest, 'tis in mine heartily to scorn such a Rascal, and the vile God whom he serves.

May 4. 1719.

*I am,*

*Your, &c.*



T O

To \* \* \* \* *Esq;*

*Upon the first publishing the Guardians.*

NOT being able to come, I write to you, resolving to be with you one way or other. As soon as you left me Yesterday I sent for all the *Guardians* which are publish'd; and while the Messenger was gone for them, I was trying to divine what sort of scribbling Fit had seiz'd upon *Teague* this Bout, whether it might be a *Quotidian* as in the *Spectator*, or a *Tertian* as in the *Tatler*, for I pray'd to Heav'n to defend us from a *Quartan*, because that might make Dulness lasting. Upon the Arrival of the Papers I found that it was a *Quotidian*, not without Joy; for old *Hippocrates* tells us somewhere, that tho' a *Quotidian* proceeds for the most part from Phlegm, yet is it of no long Continuance. I perceive by the Beginning of the second Paper, that *Teague* has chang'd both his Name and his Country, being, as I suppose, ashamed of the latter. But the Mischief of it is, that he shews the true one by the adopted one, the



the latter being almost as ridiculous a one as the former. He was born, he tells us, in a lone House within half a Mile of the Metropolis of the two Kings of *Brentford*. I make no doubt but that the more he discovers himself, the more he will verify the old Saying, *Regis ad exemplum*, or, Like Sovereigns like Subjects. And now a Word to his adopted Name too; *Nestor Ironside*, Esq; For what Reason he took that Christian Heathen Name *Nestor*, I cannot imagine, unless he thought that that wise Name would set off his Folly and make it look more ridiculous. But *Teague* apparently took the Sir-name from his real *Hybernian* Appellation, or the inflexible Obstinacy of his own Temper. As I have the extraordinary Honour to be acquainted with him, I am about to write a learned Letter to him; in which I design to reproach him a little for his too constant Gravity in his new Production, and to let him know that *quire Ironside* is too grave and too serious an Offspring of his ludicrous Ancestors, that the Reader complains that he meets with nothing at all to divert him in it, no Consort of Musical Instruments playing upon one another, not so much as a Couple of Pipes broke by the violent Agitation of a Jig at his Neighbour's House, nor any raggyish Enumeration of the several Branches of the Noble Family of the *Sides*, as  
that

that fine facetious Person his Grandfather number'd, but with a wonderful deal of Wit I must needs say, the several Branches of the *Staffian* Race, which Neglect, or which Delay I shall boldly tell him that his numerous Relations take very ill; that Sir *Hector Backside* makes a Noise about it; that that old Tarpawlin *Bully Broadside* roars at it; Mr. *Humphrey Wrongside* grumbles at it; Mr. *Abraham Weakside* is much dissatisfied; even waggish *Jack Fireside* takes it amiss, and his own Namesake *Nestor Blindside* will never be Friends with him more. I shall let him know that even the Females of his adopted Race resent it; that the courteous Lady Mrs. *Cheapside* receives no small Disquiet from it; that that well-dispos'd Lass Mrs. *Bedside* very much complains of it; that that obstreperous Carrion Moll *Waterside* stuns the Ears of all that approach her with it; and that that impudent Jade *Doll Commonside* has her Back as high as her Belly about it.

But you must know, Sir, that this arduous Undertaking is not carried on by *Teague* alone, but by a Triple League. I shall give you an Account of the two other Confederates by the first Opportunity.

I am, S I R,  
Your, &c.  
T O

T O

Mr. WALTER WEST.

S I R,

I Return you my hearty Thanks for your friendly Endeavours to serve me on *Saturday*, but am amaz'd at the Brutality of that Captain of Farce ———; who not only refus'd to witness the Receipt, but to open my Letter; saying, that it was out of his Sphere. I must confess a Brute acts in a narrow Sphere, and Civility and Humanity are out of that Sphere. If it were any other Person but Captain ———, one would find him out, after this Affront, serve him as *Hudibras* did *Whachum*, and attack the Apartment of Honour in him.

*Whachum his Sea-Coal Prong threw by,  
And basely turn'd his Back to fly;  
But Hudibras gave him a twitch  
As quick as Lightning in the Breech,  
Just in the Place where Honour's lodg'd  
As wise Philosophers have judg'd;  
Because*



*Because a Kick in that part more  
Hurts Honour than deep Wounds before.*

But the Captain is a privileg'd Person,  
and what he does, like what he says, is only  
fit to be laugh'd at. But as his Folly and  
infinite Baseness are only fit for Contempt:  
Your Generosity and Humanity merit all  
my Esteem, and have oblig'd me to be al-  
ways,

*S I R,*

March 31,  
1714.

*Your most Humble Servant,*

JOHN DENNIS.



TO

Mr. JAC. TON. Sen.

*On the Conspiracy against the Reputation of Mr. DRYDEN.*

SIR,

WHEN I had the good Fortune to meet you in the City, it was with Concern that I heard from you of the Attempt to lessen the Reputation of Mr. Dryden; and 'tis with Indignation that I have since learnt that that Attempt has chiefly been carried on by small Poets, who ungratefully strive to eclipse the Glory of a great Man, from whom alone they derive their own faint Lustre. But that Eclipse will be as Momentary as that of the Sun was lately. The Reputation of Mr. Dryden will soon break out again in its full Splendor, and theirs will disappear. It was upon hearing of this Attempt that I reflected with some Amazement, that I

U

should

should have got the Reputation of an ill-natur'd Man, by exposing the Absurdities of living Authors; and Authors for the most part of great Mediocrity, tho' I have always done it openly and fairly, and upon just and personal Provocations; and that these should basely arraign the Reputation of a great Man deceas'd, who now can make no Answer for himself, and upon whom they fawn'd while living, and should yet escape uncensur'd. But when I heard that that Attempt was in favour of —, 'tis impossible to express to what a height my Indignation and Disdain were rais'd. Good God! was there ever any Nation in which (I will not say a false Taste, for we never had a true one, but in which) a wrong Sense and a fatal Delusion so generally prevail'd! For have not too many of us lately appear'd to condemn every thing that is great and glorious, and to praise and exalt every thing that is base and infamous? Have not too many of us shewn to all the World, by a manifest execrable Choice, that they prefer Weakness to Power, Folly to Wisdom, Poverty to Wealth, Fury and Madness to Moderation, Infamy to Glory, Submission to Victory, Slavery to Liberty, Idolatry to Religion, the Duke of O. to the D. of M. the Pretender to the Royal George our only rightful King, and Mr. — to Mr. *Dryden*? If I appear too warm, I hope you will



will excuse my Affection for the Memory, and my Zeal for the Reputation of my departed Friend, whom I infinitely esteem'd when living for the Solidity of his Thought, for the Spring, the Warmth, and the beautiful Turn of it; for the Power, and Variety, and Fulness of his Harmony; for the Purity, the Perspicuity, the Energy of his Expression; and (whenever the following great Qualities are requir'd) for the Pomp and Solemnity and Majesty of his Style.

You may now see, Sir, by this Letter, how little most Men know one another, who converse daily together. How many were there in Mr. *Dryden's* Life-time, who endeavour'd to make him believe, that I should be the foremost, if I surviv'd him, of all his Acquaintance to arraign his Memory; whereas I am he of all his Acquaintance, who, tho' I flatter'd him least while living, having been contented to do him Justice both behind his Back and before his Enemies Face, am now the foremost to assert his Merit, and to vindicate his Glory.

If Mr. *Dryden* has Faults, (as where is the Mortal who has none?) I by searching for them perhaps could find them. But whatever the mistaken World may think, I am always willing to be pleas'd, nay, am always greedy of Pleasure as any *Epicurean* living; and whenever I am naturally touch'd, I give my self up to the first Impression, and

never look for Faults. But whenever a cried-up Author, upon the first reading him, does not make a pleasing Impression on me; I am apt to seek for the Reason of it, that I may know if the Fault is in him or in me. Wherever Genius runs thro' a Work, I forgive its Faults, and wherever that is wanting no Beauties can touch me. Being struck by Mr. *Dryden's* Genius, I have no Eyes for his Errors; and I have no Eyes for his Enemies Beauties, because I am not struck by their Genius.

*I am,*

June 4. 1715.

*S I R,*

*Your, &c.*



To Mr. \* \* \*

S I R,

AS I came Home in the Coach on Friday Night, I ruminated upon the Passage in Mr. Waller's Verses to my Lord Roscommon, and found indeed that the Words are not strictly reconcileable to Purity of *English* and *Grammar*; but then there are several Passages in *Virgil* and *Horace*, which are as little in the compass of a regular Construction; for Example, that in the Eclogues,

*Et certamen erat Corydon cum Thyrside  
magnum.*

And that Passage in the fifth of the *Æneis*, where *Nisus* says to *Æneas*

————— *Quæ munera Niso  
Digna dabis? primam merui qui laude coronam;*

U 3

Ni



*Ni me, quæ Salium, Fortuna inimica,  
tulisset.*

Where *merui* is certainly for *meruissem*, and so *Virgil* makes bold not only with the Mood but the Tense. For my Part, I am for preserving the Purity of Language ev'n in the boldest Flights of Poetry, but then I am apt to be indulgent to the Faults of great Masters, not only because they are few, but in Consideration of the Pleasure which they have otherwise given me. He would be but an ill-natur'd Man, who after having had the Pleasure of enjoying a fine Woman, should fall to finding Fault with her Moles, or some other Blemishes, which perhaps after all, are only so many Shadows to set off her ravishing Beauties.

I was not a little surpriz'd at the Question, whether Mr. *Waller's* Verses to *Amoret* mov'd me. What if they dont? Is there not the *pulchrum* as well as the *dulce* in Poetry? But *Horace*, perhaps, you'll say, is for having them both in the same Poem.

*Non satis est pulchra esse Poemata dulcia  
sunt,*

*Et quocunque volunt animum Auditoris a-  
gunt.*

But

But then he is certainly speaking of Tragedy, otherwise he must damn most of his own Odes. For ev'n of those which are writ to Women, there is but one which has a great deal of Tenderness; and yet most o; the rest are undoubtedly very fine. After all, the *pulchrum* in Poetry moves as certainly as the *dulce*, but then the first moves the Enthusiastick Passions, as the latter does the vulgar ones. Yet to come at last close to the Question, the Verses to *Amoret* move even the vulgar Passions in me, as they ought to do: It being impossible to take a Survey in them of Mr. *Waller's* Good-nature, and his Gratitude, without pitying and loving him.

O<sup>d</sup>. I. 1717.

*I am*

*Your most obedient Servant,*

John Dennis.

U 4

To

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*To the* EXAMINER.

*Upon his wise Paper of the Tenth of  
January, 1711.*

**I**T was upon the fourth of this instant *February* that I was persuaded by some of my Acquaintance to peruse thy Paper of the tenth of *January*, in which, as they told me, it was surmis'd by several, that you pretended to father upon me the Letter called *the Englishman's Thanks to the Duke of Marlborough*. It was the second of thy Papers that I ever read, tho' I have handled several of them. Thou seem'st to have a great Genius for Water Language, and to be aiming at the Post and Reputation of Water Orator, which thou wilt fill as worthily, as *Taylour* did that of Water Poet. But tell me truly, what does thy Execrability mean? From whence this Pride, this Insolence, this Arrogance? What hast thou said, what hast thou writ, what hast thou done, to give thee the least Shadow of a Pretence to it? Art thou such an Idiot to be of Opinion, that thou art the only foul-mouth'd Fellow in *England*? Is it so hard



hard a matter, think'st thou, to cry *Block-head, stupid Head*, the most insipid and contemptible of Mankind? Is there any Thought, any Invention, any Understanding of thine requisite for the making use of these Flowers of Rhetorick? Is not a Joker in a long party-colour'd Coat as capable of all this as a Joker in a long black Coat? Thou say'st that I shall die without knowing that I am the most insipid and contemptible of all Human Creatures. Thou art in the right of it; I shall die without knowing any thing of this, tho' I live to the Age of *Methusalem*, if I hear it from none but thee and such scribbling Slaves as thou art. But thou, before thou diest, wilt know a great deal worse than this of thy self. Before thou diest, thou wilt know that thou art the most insipid, the vilest and most contemptible, I will not say of all Human Creatures, for Reason thou never hadst, and Humanity thou hast long disclaim'd, but the vilest and most contemptible of all Dogs; for tho' the rest of thy Species bark like thee at the worthiest of Men who are Strangers to them, and crouch and fawn like thee upon the vilest of Men whom they know, yet no Dog but thy self did ever first fawn and crouch, and afterwards bark, and bite, and betray; no, never any Dog was so vile before as to fawn upon a Master thro' two Kingdoms, and afterwards to fly at his Throat.

Thus

Thus have I shewn thee what thou art, and while thou art reading each Period of this, thy Conscience will be thy Check, and will heartily cry *Amen* to it. As for me, thou art not to be told, that I have the Approbation, and Applause, and Esteem of thy Masters; thy Masters, who use thee like a common Whore, abhor and detest thee while they use thee, and will command their Servants to kick thee out of Doors as soon as the Lust of their Ambition is satisfied.

I thank my God I am altogether a Stranger to thy Person, but give me leave to shew thee, how insipid and contemptible thou art as an Author. Insipid Panegyrist are they who praise with general Compliments and thread-bare Commendations, Compliments which are equally applicable to all Subjects, and to use which demanded neither Imagination nor Judgment. And 'tis these Panegyrist that have been chiefly the Marks of *Boileau's* judicious and generous Satyrs. Insipid Libellers are they who use general Injuries and *Billingsgate* Defamations, and which the errantest Fool may speak of the most illustrious Person, as easily as a Dog can bark at the Moon. Thou art one of those insipid Libellers, and art by so much more odious and more despicable than an insipid Panegyrist, by how much a Blockhead with Ill-nature is more  
hateful

hateful and more contemptible than a Fool with good Humour.

The insipid Reproaches which thou usest, have been utter'd a thousand times by thy self of a thousand different Persons. But I shall say that of thee, which every one cannot say, and shall say what can be said of none but thy execrable self alone; and when I have dragg'd thee from the lurking Hole, to which thy base Fears have condemn'd thee, (for thou never hadst Sense enough to have Shame) and expos'd thee to the open Light, that is to eternal Infamy, then let the World judge who is the insipid and who the contemptible.

By thy Impudence, thy Ignorance, thy sophistical arguing, thy pedantick declamatory Style, and thy brutal *Billingsgate* Language thou canst be none but some illiterate Pedant, who has liv'd twenty Years in an University; by thy being a turbulent hot-brain'd Incendiary, a hot-brain'd Incendiary with a cool Heart, one may easily guess at the University which gave thee thy Education. By thy wonderful Charity, thou canst be nothing but a scandalous Priest, hateful to God and detestable to Men, and agreeable to none but Devils, who makest it thy Business to foment Divisions between Communities and private Persons, in spite of that Charity which is the fundamental Doctrine of  
that



that Religion which thou pretendst to teach. How amazing a Reflection is it, that, in spite of that Divine Doctrine, the Christian World should be the only part of the Globe embroil'd in endless Divisions. From whence can this proceed, but from Priests like thee, who are the Pests of Society and the Bane of Religion. But 'tis not enough to say thou art a Priest, 'tis time to point out what Priest thou art. Thou art a Priest then who mad'st thy first Appearance in the World like a dry Joker in Controversy, a spiritual Buffoon, an Ecclesiastical *Jack Pudding*, by publishing a Piece of waggish Divinity, which was writ with a Design to banter all Christianity; yes, thou nobly began'st, as *Judas Iscariot* ended; began'st by crucifying thy God afresh, and selling him to *John Nutt* for ten Pound and a Crown, and so under-selling half in half thy execrable Predecessor. Hadst thou but had half his common Sense, thou hadst had his Remorse and consequently his Destiny; instead of which thou fell'st from selling and betraying thy God to selling and betraying thy old Friends. So that hadst thou liv'd in the time of *Judas*, thou wouldst infinitely have surps'd him in Villany, thou wouldst have betray'd both Christ and all his Apostles, nay, wouldst have undermin'd, and underfold, and betray'd even *Judas* the Betrayer himself.

When

When thou wert come piping hot from betraying both Friends and God, thou wert often heard to cry most impudently, but most truly, out, that the Church was in Danger. Any one may swear, when it has such Priests, that 'tis not in Danger, but upon the very brink of Ruine; and that if it were not supported by God himself, it would immediately tumble.

Yet 'tis hard to be angry with such a Miscreant, when I reflect, that he who has us'd me so, has us'd his God worse. For thou hast denyed his very Being; which is to degrade him below the meanest of his own Creatures, not only below Fools and Ideots, but even below Vermin, Insects, Mites, and all the Creatures of the material invisible World, even below the *Examiner*. For Nothing must always be less than Something, let Something be never so little.

Thou hast fall'n upon me with the Rage of a mad Dog or a Mohock; not because thou hadst any Provocation, but because thy Madness made thee believe that the first thing that came in thy way, was the Cause of thy Uneasiness. Nothing is more certain than that I knew nothing of the Letter to the Duke of *Marlborough* till the fourteenth of this instant *February*, which, according to thy own Account, was five Weeks after it was publish'd. I shall live to see thee cry Penny Papers, before thou wilt

wilt see me write them. Yet if I had writ that Paper I would boldly have own'd it, in spite of thee and of all thy Abettors. What, shall I be afraid or asham'd to commend the greatest Man upon Earth, when thou art neither afraid nor asham'd most basely to calumniate him? But go on in the Course thou art in, I cannot wish thee a greater Curse. Go on to calumniate and to vilify all that is truly great and illustrious, and to flatter and to extoll all that is vile and despicable. Whatever Thoughts thou either hast, or wouldst seem to have, of me, I would have thee to know, that God and Nature have placed me infinitely above doing thy base Drudgery, and being the contemptible execrable Tool of any Party whatever. If it be true that a Kingdom divided against it self shall not stand, if intestine Division be the Flaw that lets in Death to a mighty Nation, what Damnation must that wholesale Cut-throat deserve, who makes it the sole Business of his Life to incense one miserable Half against the unfortunate other? Yet this I'll say for thee, that thou art the worst of Murderers in thy Heart, yet Thanks to thy Impotence thy Hands are entirely free; and what *Dryden* maliciously said of *Shadwell*, is truly applicable to none but thee. And so I bid thee heartily farewell.

L. E. T.



LETTERS *upon the Sentiments*  
*of the two first Acts of CATO.*

To Mr. C—

LETTER I.

S I R,

AFTER I had endeavour'd to shew the  
absurd Conduct of the Tragedy of  
*Cato*, by the *Remarks* which were printed  
by *Bernard Lintott*, the numerous Idoliz-  
ers of that Tragedy, whose unparallell'd  
Zeal was the Child of their unparallell'd Ig-  
norance, shelter'd themselves under the  
Beauty of the Sentiments of that Poem. Up-  
on which I, who knew the Sentiments to be  
at least as absurd as the Conduct, wrote  
two long Letters to a learned and judicious  
Friend, by which I endeavour'd to shew  
the Sentiments as incongruous as the Con-  
duct. When I acquainted you with this  
at Mr. W—'s House, you were pleas'd  
to declare, that you desir'd to see a Copy  
of those Letters. And when, upon that,  
I

I acquainted you by what poor Artifice I had been depriv'd of the Copy of those Letters, as my Friend had been of the Original, you seem'd desirous to see as many of the lost Remarks as I could recollect, which, in compliance with your Desires, I shall send you, from time to time, as I can recollect them; hoping that they may appear solid to one who has shewn so much Justness in all the Judgments you have made of things of this nature; but desiring, at the same time, that you would not expect any thing ev'n of that little Force and that little Grace of Expression which they might have in the two foremention'd Letters, for which I have not time, and for want of which I promise to make what Amends I can, by the Solidity of my Remarks, and by the Shortness of my Letters.

First then, I desire to know, whether the exclaiming against *Pharsalia* so often in this Tragedy, two Years after that Battle had been fought in a different and distant part of the World, and but two Days after the Battel of *Thapsus*, which was fought at the very Gates of *Utica*, and by the loss of which the present Danger of the People in *Utica* was occasion'd, is not as absurd as it would have been in the Marshal de *Villeroy* to have cryed out after the Defeat at *Ramelies*, *Blenheim*, *Blenheim*, oh *Blenheim*! And we have the more reason to ask

ask this Question, if we consider that it was *Pompey* who commanded at *Pharsalia*, but it was *Cato* who commanded at *Thapsus*. If any one happens to answer here, that the Defeat at *Pharsalia* destroy'd the Flower of the Republican Army, and consequently was the occasion of the Defeat at *Thapsus*; to that I answer, that the Defeat at *Thapsus* was not occasion'd by the Overthrow at *Pharsalia*. For at that rate much more might the Overthrow which happen'd afterwards in *Spain*, be attributed to the two Defeats at *Thapsus* and *Pharsalia*; whereas 'tis very plain, that in *Spain*, notwithstanding the two former Defeats, *Cesar's* Army had been defeated by young *Pompey's*, if young *Pompey* had not been vanquish'd by *Cesar*. For it was the invincible Spirit of *Cesar* which got the Day, which his Army had certainly lost if they had fought under any other General. Besides, suppose that we were oblig'd to own, that the Defeat at *Thapsus* was occasion'd by that at *Pharsalia*, yet the Author could draw nothing from that but a false Politick Reflection; for as great Passion is occasion'd by great Surprise, it always dwells upon the last Disaster. But I begin to run into length, which I would industriously avoid. You shall have more by the first Opportunity.

Nov. 4. 1718.

*I am, S I R, Your, &c.*  
X  
On



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*On the Sentiments of CATO*

LETTER II.

S I R,

**I**N sending these Remarks upon the Sentiments of *Cato* to you, I shall rather endeavour to entertain you with frequent Letters than to fatigue you with long ones that you may still leave off, if not with an Appetite, yet without that Disgust which attends great Satiety.

To come then to the Matter, without any more ceremony, I desire to know whether that Sentiment of *Marcus* in the first Scene of the Play,

*Love is not to be reason'd down, or lost  
In high Ambition, or a thirst of Greatness*

is not false in it self, according to the Reflection of *Roche foucault*, *On passe souvent de l'Amour a l'Ambition, mais on revient gueres, de l'Ambition a l'Amour* and whether 'tis not most abominable in one, who just before had profess'd himse

a Stoick? which Sect of Philosophers pretended by the Force of Reason to extirpate all the Passions.

The first Speech of *Sempronius* to *Portius* begins thus,

*Good Morrow, Portius! let us once embrace,  
Once more embrace; whilst yet we both are  
free.*

Now are not these formal Embraces, between two People who saw one another every Hour, something upon the Comique?

But what *Portius* says to this is still more whimsical:

*My Father has this Morning call'd together  
To this poor Hall, his little Roman Senate,  
(The Leavings of Pharsalia.)*

Still harping upon *Pharsalia*.

Now, to whom does he tell this extraordinary piece of News? why, to the only Senator who makes any figure in that Assembly, ridiculous or not ridiculous? so that if the Senate was called together that Morning, he had been certainly summon'd. But this Senate methinks was very early summon'd. 'Tis now not above half an Hour after Day-break.

But why the Leavings of *Pharsalia*? why still harping upon *Pharsalia*? when 'tis evident

dent from History, that this mock Senate, this Senate in Burlesque, was compos'd of a Parcel of Scoundrels who had never seen *Pharsalia*. For can you or any one believe, that if they had been of real Senatorian Rank, *Cæsar* would have us'd them as he did, who hang'd up as many of them as fell into his Hands? But let us now see what *Sempronius* is pleas'd to reply to *Portius*.

*Not all the Pomp and Majesty of Rome  
Can raise her Senate more than Cato's Presence.*

———O, my *Portius*!

*Could but I call that wond'rous Man my Father,*

*Would but thy Sister Marcia be propitious  
To thy Friend's Vows, I might be blest in deed.*

*Port. Alas, Sempronius! would'st thou  
talk of Love*

*To Marcia, while her Father's Life's in danger?*

*Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling Vestal,*

*When she beholds the Holy Flame expiring*

*Sempr. The more I see the Wonders of thy Race,*

*The more I'm charm'd. Thou must take heed my Portius,*

*The World has all its Eyes on Cato's Son.*

*Thy Father's Merit sets thee up to View,*

*An*



*Familiar, Moral and Critical.* 309

*And shews thee in the fairest Point of Light,  
To make thy Virtues or thy Faults conspicuous.*

Port. *Well dost thou seem to check my  
ling'ring here  
On this important Hour.*

Now was ever such a Consequence drawn  
from such an Antecedent? For let us con-  
sider the genuine Meaning of what was said  
before by *Portius*, and what was answer'd  
by *Sempronius*.

Port. *Alas, Sempronius! would'st thou  
talk of Love*

*To Martia, while her Father's Life's in dan-  
ger?*

*Thou might'st as well court the pale trembling  
Vestal,*

*When she beholds the Holy Flame expiring.*

Semp. *The more I see the Wonders of thy  
Race*

*The more I'm charm'd—— Thou must take  
heed, my Portius,*

*The World has all its Eyes on Cato's Son.*

*thy Father's Merit sets thee up to View,*

*And shews thee in the fairest Point of Light,*

*To make thy Virtues or thy Faults conspi-  
cuous.*

Now, what were these Wonders of Ca-  
to's Race? why, their Stoicism, their Apa-  
thy, their curbing their Passions by the Force

of their Reason. For what occasion'd this Speech of *Sempronius*, and this Caution which he gives to *Portius*? Why, what but *Portius*'s declaring the Resolution of his Sister *Martia* not to admit of any effeminate unworthy Passion while her Father's Life is in danger. So that methinks *Portius* might reasonably have interpreted this Caution of *Sempronius*, as a Reprimand for his own extravagant and unreasonable Passion, and not have construed it as a Design to send him on an *April* Errand to harangue a poor Parcel of drunken Sots before they were out of their first Sleep. But, as we observ'd in the printed Remarks, the Author wanted to be rid of *Portius* to make Room for *Syphax*, and so thrust him out with as little Ceremony as *Manly* did my Lord *Plausible*.

I am,

Your, &c.

*On the Sentiments of CATO.*

L E T T E R III.

S I R,

**T**O enter into Matter without Ceremony, I should be glad to know your Opinion of what *Syphax* tells *Sempronius* in the Beginning of the Scene between them in this first Act.

*Syph. Sempronius, all is ready;  
I've founded my Numidians Man by Man,  
And find them ripe for a Revolt: They all  
Complain aloud of Cato's Discipline,  
And wait but the Command to change their  
Master.*

Now where's the Policy or the Prudence of founding them Man by Man? The common Soldiers obey their Commanders, and 'tis dangerous to trust a Conspiracy with too many. But when did *Syphax* do this? 'Tis but half an Hour after Day-break, when he says this: If he had done the Day before, methinks *Sempronius* his

X 4

Fellow-



Fellow-Conspirator should have known it over-night, since *Cæsar* was so soon expected, and *Sempronius* himself seems to be of that Opinion.

*Believe me, Syphax, there's no time to waste;  
Ev'n while we speak our Conqueror comes on.  
And gathers Ground upon us ev'ry Moment.  
Alas! thou knowest not Cæsar's active Soul,  
With what a dreadful Course he rushes on  
From War to War. In vain has Nature form'd  
Mountains and Oceans to oppose his Passage;  
He bounds o'er all, victorious in his March,  
The Alpes and Pyreneans sink before him,  
Thro' Winds and Waves and Storms he  
works his Way,*

*Impatient for the Battel: One Day more  
Will set the Victor thundring at our Gates.*

so that according to this 'tis plain, that *Syphax* ought to have acquainted *Sempronius* over-night, with the Inclination which his *Numidians* had to revolt, provided he had founded them the Day before; and how he could sound them Man by Man, by Night, in a Town of War, as *Utica* was, is something hard to conceive. But to dwell no longer on this: If all the *Numidians* were thus at the Command of *Syphax*, how comes *Sempronius* so earnest about the gaining *Juba* as he is in the Remainder of this Speech?

*But*

*But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?*

*That still wou'd recommend thee more to Cæsar,  
And challenge better Terms.*

But, Sir, how comes *Sempronius* in the foregoing Speech to use this Language to *Syphax*,

*Alas! thou know'st not Cæsar's active Soul?*

when 'tis plain from the Scene in the first Act between *Syphax* and *Juba*, that the former is so very well acquainted with the Character and Manners of the present *Romans* in general; and when 'tis plain from the Scene between *Juba* and *Syphax* in the second Act, that *Syphax* was so very well acquainted with the Manners and Actions of their remotest Ancestors.

*Juba. Wouldst thou degrade thy Prince  
into a Ruffian?*

*Syph. The boasted Ancestors of these great  
Men,*

*Whose Virtues you admire, were all such  
Ruffians.*

*This Dread of Nations, this almighty Rome,  
That comprehends in its wide Empire's  
Bounds*

*All*

*All under Heav'n, was founded on a Rape.  
 Your Scipio's, Cæsar's, Pompey's and your  
 Cato's,  
 (These Gods on Earth) are all the spurious  
 Brood  
 Of violated Maids, of ravish'd Sabines.*

Now is it possible that a Man who talks at this Rate, should be unacquainted with the Character of *Cæsar*, who was the greatest Captain that ever had been in the World, and whose Actions had made so much noise in the World for so many Years together? Is it possible that any one now alive should be acquainted with the Manners and Actions of the very first Princes of the *Savoy* Family, and should be a Stranger to the Character and the Actions of Prince *Eugene*?

But, Sir, I cannot imagine, for what Reason *Sempronius* should appear thus solicitous for the drawing over *Juba* into this Conspiracy,

*But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young  
 Juba?*

*That still would recommend thee more to  
 Cæsar*

*And challenge better Terms———*

when 'tis plain from the Soliloquy of *Sempronius* in the sixth Page of this first Act (*Edit. 1.*) that the principal Motive that engag'd



engag'd *Sempronius* in this Conspiracy was  
the possessing *Marcia*?

*Cato* has us'd me Ill: He has refused  
His Daughter *Marcia* to my ardent Vows.  
Besides, his baffled Arms, and ruined Cause  
Are Barrs to my Ambition. *Cæsar's* Fa-  
vour,

That show'ns down Greatness on his Friends,  
will raise me

To Rome's first Honours. If I give up *Cato*,  
I claim in my Reward his Captive Daugh-  
ter.

Now *Juba* was not only *Sempronius* his Ri-  
val, but *Sempronius* knew that he was so,  
as 'tis plain from p. 31. of the first Edition,  
Act 2.

*Semp.* Syphax, I now may hope, thou hast  
forsook

Thy *Juba's* Cause, and wishest *Marcia* mine.

Now 'tis evident that since *Sempronius* expe-  
cted to possess the Daughter, by betraying the  
Father to *Cæsar*, how comes he to appear  
so earnest to reconcile his Rival to *Cæsar*?

*Semp.* Be sure to press upon him every  
Motive.

*Juba's* Surrender, since his Father's Death,  
Would give up Africk into *Cæsar's* Hands,  
And make him Lord of half the burning  
Zone. Now

Now, Sir, did you ever hear of a duller Lover, or a more stupid Plotter than this *Sempronius*, who being engag'd in a Conspiracy against *Cato* by the Motives of Love and Ambition, appears zealous to reconcile a pow'rful Rival to *Cæsar*, who, being reconcil'd, would infallibly traverse him in his Passion, and consequently in his Ambition? Can any thing be more plain, than that *Cæsar*, who sacrific'd ev'ry thing to his Interest and his Ambition, would sacrifice both the Passion and Ambition of *Sempronius* to him who was able

*To make him Lord of half the burning Zone,*

And can any thing be more manifest than that *Juba*, if once reconcil'd to *Cæsar*, would, unless he were more stupid than *Sempronius*, use all his Interést with *Cæsar*, to hinder his Rival from mounting, as he propos'd to himself, to the first Honours of *Rome*, least those Honours should be as it were so many steps towards his succeeding in his Passion for *Marcia*? But I have exceeded the Bounds to which I propos'd to confine myself in ev'ry Letter, and am, till the next Opportunity,

S I R,

*Yours, &c.*

*On the Sentiments of CATO.*

L E T T E R · I V.

*S I R,*

I Come now to the Scene between *Juba* and *Syphax*, being the fourth Scene of the first Act, which you have heard so extravagantly commended. When I come to shew you that the Author has manag'd Matters with so much Dexterity, that the whole Scene is one gross Fault, that *Syphax* is very much in the wrong in his Invectives against the *Romans*, that *Juba* is more in the wrong in his Defence of them, what shall we say of the Taste and Judgment of its Admirers? shall we forbear to cry out with Indignation, *Quantum est in rebus inane?*

First then I come to shew that *Syphax* is very much in the wrong in his general Invective against the *Romans*. For do but consider what the Design of *Syphax* was in this Conversation with *Juba*? his Design was to draw over *Juba* to the Party of *Cesar*, according to the Request which  
*Sempronius*



*Sempronius* made him, no less than twice, in the foregoing Scene.

*But tell me, hast thou yet drawn o'er young Juba?*

*That still wou'd recommend thee more to Cæsar,  
And challenge better Terms.*

p. 7. Edit. 4.

and in the next Speech but one,

*Be sure to press upon him ev'ry Motive.  
Juba's Surrender, since his Father's Death,  
Would give up Africk into Cæsar's Hands,  
And make him Lord of half the burning Zone.*

And as soon as *Syphax* remains alone, he says,

*I'll try if yet I can reduce to Reason  
This head-strong Youth, and make him spurn  
at Cato.*

*The Time is short, Cæsar comes rushing on  
us——*

*But hold! young Juba sees me, and approaches.*

Now the first Speech of *Syphax*, in this Scene between him and *Juba*, contains a general Invective against the *Romans*.

*Syph.*

Syph. 'Tis not my Talent to conceal my  
Thoughts,  
Or carry Smiles and Sun-shine in my Face,  
When Discontent sits heavy at my Heart.  
I have not yet so much the Roman in me.

Now, Sir, the Question is, whether an In-  
vective against the *Romans* in general, is  
a probable Method to induce *Juba* to ef-  
pouse that part of them, which either was,  
or at least pass'd for, the most profligate  
part of them with all the impartial World,  
and more particularly with *Juba*? The  
Question is, whether an Invective against  
the *Roman* Fraud and Hypocrisie was like-  
ly to make *Juba* desert *Cato*, whom all the  
World allowed to be sincere, and to bring  
him over to *Cesar* who was renown'd for  
the Artifice of his Dissimulation?

But as *Syphax* is very much in the wrong  
in this general Invective against the *Romans*  
in general, *Juba*'s infinitely more so in his  
Defence of them. For *Syphax* is not in the  
wrong absolutely, but only with relation to  
the Design with which he speaks, for abso-  
lutely speaking, he is so far from saying too  
much against them, that he does not speak  
a hundredth Part of the Truth. And what  
*Juba* says in Defence of them, does by no  
means belong to the *Romans* who liv'd in  
*Juba*'s Time; but to those who liv'd in the  
Vigour

Vigour 'of the Common-wealth. The *Romans*, who liv'd in *Juba's* Time, were the most profligate Race of People that ever liv'd in the World; which will easily appear by the Account that is given of their Manners by their own discerning and impartial Historian *Sallust*, in his History of the *Catilinarian* War. As you have the Works of that Prince of Historians by Heart, there is no Occasion for repeating the Passage. I appeal to you therefore, if 'tis not manifest, from the Account which *Sallust* gives of them, that the Reflection of *Syphax* in the foregoing Speech is not the hundredth Part of what his Contemporary *Romans* deserv'd, and whether it does not appear likewise from the same Account that the following Sentiments of *Juba* are not only false but base.

*Jub. Why dost thou cast out such ungen'rous Terms*

*Against the Lords and Sovereigns of the World?*

*Dost thou not see Mankind fall down before them,*

*And own the Force of their superior Virtue?*

*Is there a Nation in the Wilds of Africk,*

*Amidst our barren Rocks, and burning Sands,*

*That does not tremble at the Roman Name?*

But let us see what *Syphax* replies to this Speech of *Juba*. Syph.



*Syph. Gods! where's the Worth that sets  
this People up*

*Above your own Numidia's tawny Sons!  
Do they with tougher Sinews bend the Bow?  
Or flies the Javelin swifter to its Mark,  
Launch'd from the Vigour of a Roman Arm?  
Who like our active African instructs  
The fiery Steed; and trains him to his Hand?  
Or guides in Troops th' embattled Elephant,  
Loaden with War? These, these are Arts,  
my Prince,*

*In which your Lama does not stoop to Rome.*

The Preheminence over other Nations to which the *Romans* ow'd the Extent of their Empire, did not proceed so much from the superior Strength or Address of their Individuals, consider'd as Individuals, as from their publick and military Discipline. However, what *Syphax* says here would not be so very impertinent, if the Design of *Syphax* were to draw *Juba* off from the *Romans* in general; but as I said before, I cannot imagine how he can pretend by these means to draw *Juba* off from that Party of the *Romans* which he believ'd the juster, and to make him espouse that part of them, of the Justice of whose Cause he had no manner of Opinion.

But now, Sir, let us come to what *Juba* replies to *Syphax* in the Defence of his *Romans*.

Y

*Juba.*

Juba. *These all are Virtues of a meaner Rank,  
Perfections that are plac'd in Bones and Nerves.*

*A Roman Soul is bent on higher Views:  
To civilize the rude unpolish'd World,  
And lay it under the Restraint of Laws;  
To make Man mild, and sociable to Man;  
To cultivate the wild licentious Savage,  
With Wisdom, Discipline, and lib'ral Arts  
Th' Embellishments of Life: Virtues like  
these,*

*Make Human Nature shine, reform the Soul  
And break our fierce Barbarians into Men*

Now, Sir, are you able without a just Indignation to behold in *Juba* this base Admiration of a Nation, which in its Progress to universal Monarchy endeavour'd to enslave the very Kings of *Africa*, as it has done those of *Europe* and *Asia* before? The truth of it is, that wherever the *Romans* at this time of day carried their Arms, they taught the Nations their Luxury, their Rapines, their Frauds, their civil Dissention and in short, all the deplorable Corruption of their Manners; and *Syphax* might have answer'd him a thousand Times more fully than he does in the following Speech.

*Syph. Patience kind Heav'ns!—Excuse  
an old Man's warmth.*

*Whe*

*What are these wond'rous civilizing Arts,  
This Roman Polish, and this smooth Beha-  
viour,*

*That render Man thus tractable and tame?  
Are they not only to disguise our Passions,  
To set our Looks at variance with our  
Thoughts,*

*To check the Starts and Sallies of the Soul,  
And break off all its Commerce with the  
Tongue;*

*In short, to change us into other Creatures,  
Than what our Nature and the Gods design'd  
us.*

Here are not above two or three of the Sentiments which are found in the fore-mention'd Account of *Sallust*, whereas that admirable Historian employs whole Pages in describing the prodigious Corruption of the *Roman* Manners.

In the following Speech, *Juba* pretends to convince *Syphax* of the Virtue of the *Romans* in general, I mean of the *Romans* who were his Contemporaries, by the Virtue of *Cato*; as if there were any Conclusion from the Virtue of one Man to the Virtue of a whole Nation; one might as reasonably conclude from the Understanding of one Man to the Understanding of a whole Nation: one might as reasonably conclude that the *Thebans* were the brightest People of *Greece*, because *Pindar*



was the greatest of the Lyrick Poets, as that they were naturally the bravest People of *Greece*, because *Pelopidas* and *E-paminondas* were perhaps the greatest Captains of their Time. We have shewn already, that the *Romans* of those Times were so far from being more virtuous than other People, that they were more profligate in their Manners than any other Nation whatever.

The Virtue of *Cato* therefore, such as it was, must have been owing to something else than the national Virtue of his Cotemporary *Romans*. It was owing perhaps to an Affectation of the austere Virtue of his Ancestors, to *Grecian* Philosophy, to an over-grown monstrous Pride, which appears ev'ry where throughout his Character, to the Obstinacy of an inflexible Temper, and perhaps I might add to likewise invincible Ignorance; I mean an utter Ignorance of the Condition and Constitution of his Country, and of the Changes that had been made in it, by the Alteration of their Manners, by the loss of their *Agrarian*, and by prolongation of Magistracy; so that the *Roman* Liberty in *Cato's* Time was in a desperate Condition, and was irretrievable unless by absolute Power.

It was never to be recover'd by *Cato* *Cæsar* alone could restore it. *Cato* had only the impotent Will, but *Cæsar* alone had the

the Power. The merry way of reasoning in this Scene, puts me in Mind of an Observation which *Rapin* makes upon the *French* Poets his Contemporaries, that Logick was so much neglected in their Poems, that they were for the most part either Fustian or Nonsense, but I forget my Promise, and transgress my Bounds. The Remainder of this Scene must make the Subject of another Letter, which I promise to send you as soon as I have leisure to think of it.

*I am, S I R,*

*Your, &c.*



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*On the Sentiments of CATO.*

LETTER V.

S I R,

THE last time I had the Satisfaction to write to you, I was oblig'd to break off my Remarks in the middle of the Scene between *Syphax* and *Juba*, which is the fourth of the first Act. Being encourag'd by your Approbation of what I have already sent you, I shall now examine the Remainder of that Scene.

In the 11th Page *Syphax* urges *Juba* to abandon *Cato*, as you may see in the following Dialogue.

*Juba. What would'st thou have me do?*

*Syph. Abandon Cato.*

*Juba. Syphax, I should be more than twice  
an Orphan*

*By such a Loss.*

*Syph. Ay, there's the Tie that binds you.  
You long to call him Father. Marcia's Charms  
Work in your Breast unseen, and plead for  
Cato.*

*No Wonder you are deaf to all I say.*

*Juba.*



Juba. Syphax, your Zeal becomes impo-  
rtunate :

*I've hitherto permitted it to rove,  
And talk at large ; but learn to keep it in,  
Least it should take more Freedom than I'll  
give it.*

Now, Sir, can you see here, without smi-  
ling, that *Syphax* makes a Proposal to his  
Prince, which the latter believes to be  
downright villainous, and yet does not pro-  
voke him ; but as soon as the other touches  
upon his Love for *Marcia*, the Milk-sop  
takes Fire, and shews that he cannot bear  
it.

But now, Sir, let us see what *Syphax*  
says upon this Resentment of *Juba*.

*Syph. Sir, your great Father never us'd  
me thus.*

That is as much as to say, that his Father  
never reprimanded him for his Insolence  
and his Presumption ; but see how he pro-  
ceeds.

*Alas ! he's dead ; but can you e'er forget  
The tender Sorrow, and the Pangs of Nature,  
The fond Embraces, and repeated Blessings  
Which you drew from him, in your last Fare-  
wel ?*

*Still must I cherish the dear sad Remembrance,*  
Y 4 *At*

*At once to torture and to please my Soul.  
The good old King at parting wrung my Hand,  
(His Eyes brim full of Tears) then sighing  
cry'd,  
Prithee be careful of my Son! His Grief  
Swell'd up so high, he could not utter more.*

Now, Sir, 'tis plain from this Speech, that *Syphax* was present at the last parting between the Son and the Father. Let us see now, whether *Syphax* can make mention of this last parting between the Son and the Father, for any other reason than to work upon the Weakness of his young Master, and to put him out of his princely Senses. Not considering that the mention of that parting, if he supposes his Younker had common Sense, would render the Insolence and the Presumption which *Syphax* shews, by urging *Juba* to abandon *Cato* inexcusable and insupportable; because at that parting, at which we have just now shewn that *Syphax* was present, the Father strictly charges the Son never to abandon *Cato*.

This is evident from what *Juba* says in the Scene between him and *Cato* in the second Act, where *Juba* gives the other Relation of what happen'd at the last parting between his Father and himself in the following Words.

*My Father, when, some Days before his  
Death,  
He order'd me to march to Utica,  
(Alas, I thought not then his Death so near!)*  
*Wept o'er me, press'd me in his aged Arms,  
And as his Grief gave way, My Son, said he,  
Whatever Fortune shall befall thy Father,  
Be Cato's Friend, he'll train thee up to  
great  
And virtuous Deeds: Do but observe him  
well,  
Thou'lt shun Misfortunes, or thou'lt learn to  
bear them.*

But now the Son in this Scene between him and *Syphax* in the first Act, upon the Mention which *Syphax* makes of this Parting, seems entirely to have forgot that Admonition of his Father, of which he makes so circumstantial a Relation to *Cato* in the 2d Act. To be convinc'd of this, let us see what he answers to what *Syphax* said last to him.

*Juba. Alas, thy Story melts away my Soul!  
That best of Fathers! How shall I discharge  
That Gratitude and Duty which I owe him?*

*Syph. By laying up his Counsels in your  
Heart.*

*Juba. His Counsels bad me yield to thy  
Directions.*

What?



What? when those Directions were point blank contrary to his own, as they apparently are here? But what follows?

*Then Syphax chide me in severest Terms,  
Vent all thy Passion, and I'll stand its Shock  
Calm and unruffled as a Summer's Sea,  
When not a Breath of Wind flies o'er its  
Surface.*

Thus *Juba*, as I said above, has either entirely forgot that Admonition of his Father, of which he makes so circumstantial a Relation to *Cato* in the 2d Act; or has not Capacity enough to know, that what *Syphax* brings as an Excuse for his Infolence ought to render it insupportable. But now, Sir, let us see what *Syphax* says upon this melting Tendernefs of *Juba*.

*Syph. Alas, my Prince, I'd guide you to  
your Safety.*

*Jub. I do believe thou would'st; but tell  
me how?*

*Syph. Fly from the Fate that follows  
Cæsar's Foes.*

*Juba. My Father scorn'd to do it.*

*Syph. And therefore died.*

*Juba. Better to die ten thousand, thousand  
Deaths*

*Than wound my Honour.*

*Syph. Rather say your Love.*

*Juba.*

Juba. Syphax, *I've promis'd to preserve  
my Temper;*

*Why wilt thou urge me to confess a Flame  
I long have stifled, and would fain conceal.*

Now, Sir, I desire to know how *Syphax* and *Sempronius* should come to know of this Flame, if *Juba* had long stifled it, and would fain conceal it. For as *Sempronius* tells us in the third Act, no one had Access to *Marcia* but *Juba* and her Brothers. And if *Juba* had never confess'd any Passion, the Brothers sure would not talk of any such thing, before they were certain of it, tho' perhaps they might have guess'd at it; and certain they could not be, before the Declaration of *Juba*.

For what remains, tho' this Character of *Juba* is not so faulty with relation to the Rules, as some which I mentioned in the *Remarks* which were formerly publish'd by *Lintott*, yet is it more faulty, absolutely and consider'd in it self. For *Juba* is a Character that is not only shocking and contemptible to Men of Sense, at the same time that the Author endeavours to render him estimable and agreeable, but he is shocking and contemptible by the very same Qualities by which the Author endeavours to render him estimable and agreeable, and these are his Esteem and Admiration of *Cato* and of the *Romans*. For in admiring  
the

the *Romans* who were his Contemporaries, he not only admir'd the most profligately wicked of all Nations, as we have shewn above by the Testimony of their noblest Historian, but a Nation who, in their Progress to universal Monarchy, were about to ruin and enslave *Numidia*, and the rest of *Africa*, as they had done *Europe* and part of *Asia* before. And as to that Esteem and Veneration and almost Adoration which he shews for *Cato*, we have this one Remark to make ; that he thinks and acts directly counter to him, even in those very Qualities for which he pretends to admire him. For the most shining Qualities in *Cato's* Character were the Love of his Country, and the Command which he had of his Passions.

Now, Sir, for the first of these Qualities give me leave to observe, that *Cato* was a Lover of his own Country, and not of *Numidia*; and he and his *Romans* design'd to subdue *Numidia* to *Rome*, and not *Rome* to *Numidia*. If *Syphax* had been a loyal Subject and a true Friend to his Prince, and not a false Traitor and a Friend to *Rome*, he would have advis'd his Prince to have defied both *Cæsar* and *Cato*, and the *Romans* in general, and taking this Advantage of their civil Dissensions to have retreated into his own *Numidia*, and to have rows'd up all the Nations between the Tropicks against those accursed Plagues of Hu-

man



man Race, who design'd to sacrifice the Happiness and the Virtue of Mankind to their insatiable Avarice, and their detestable Ambition. And *Juba* had follow'd that Advice, if he had been wise or magnanimous enough to have had any Regard for his own Royalty and his Independency, or had been a true Patriot enough to have had half so much concern for the Liberty and Happiness of *Numidia* as *Cato* had for that of *Rome*.

Now as for the other Quality of *Cato*, the Command of his Passions; *Juba* is so far from commanding his own, that thro' an unparallell'd Impotence of Mind, he chuses that very Day to make a Declaration of his Passion for *Marcia*, and to gain her Father's Consent, which is apprehended to be the very last both of *Roman* Liberty, and of her Father's Life. And this Weakness of his is expos'd the more, and render'd the more contemptible ev'n by what *Portius* says to *Marcus* in his Praise in the first Scene of the Play.

*Behold young Juba the Numidian Prince,  
With how much Care he forms himself to  
Glory,*

*And breaks the Fierceness of his native Temper,*

*To copy out our Father's bright Example.*

*He loves our Sister Martia, greatly loves her!*

*His*

*His Eyes, his Looks, his Actions all betray it.  
But still the smother'd Fondness burns with-  
in him.*

*When most it swells and labours for a Vent,  
The sense of Honour and desire of Fame  
Drive the big Passion back into his Heart.*

So that *Juba*, it seems, after having for some time stifled his Passion, chuses that very Day to declare and divulge it, on which Reason and Decency oblig'd him most of all to conceal it.

By the way, Sir, I desire leave to observe, that for *Portius* to declare that *Juba* loves his Sister *Marcia*, and not only loves her, but greatly loves her; that his Eyes, that his Looks, that his Actions all betray that Love, that tho' he is silent the smother'd Fondness burns within him, even when it labours most for a Vent, and that he is restrain'd from divulging it, by the sense of Honour and the desire of Fame, I say, for *Portius* to declare all this, when it appears that *Juba* has not only made no mention of it before that Day, but declares it upon the only Day in which the sense of Honour and desire of Fame forbid such a Declaration, are Sentiments that appear to me to be visionary and fantastick. It seeming to me to be equally self-evident, that nothing could make such a Declaration in *Juba* dishonourable before that Day, and that nothing could have

have hinder'd it from passing for Infamous then.

Thus, Sir, have I given you an Account of the Absurdities and the Inconsistencies which are to be found in the Sentiments of the first Act of the Tragedy of *Cato*. I shall proceed to the second Act with the first Opportunity,

*I am, S I R,*

*Your, &c.*





*On the Sentiments of the second  
Act of CATO.*

LETTER VI.

S I R,

**Y**OU could not have us'd a more prevailing Argument to oblige me to continue my Remarks upon the Sentiments of *Cato*, than the assuring me that those which I have already sent you upon the Sentiments of the first Act have not been displeasing to you. I shall proceed then to the second Act, and entring upon the Subject without any more Ceremony, I shall desire to know from you, whether the first Scene of the second Act, that is the Scene which shews the Senate assembled, deserves the Applause which it met with at first from the Reader and the Spectator. In order to the answering this Question, let us consider the Design, with which *Cato*, who presides o'er it, summon'd this Assembly. Let us consider next the Manner of speaking in it, and lastly the Speeches themselves.

The

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The Design of *Cato* is to consult this Assembly about Peace or War; which he does, without so much as once consulting them, about the Means of carrying it on, or so much as once asking their Advice about it. And yet *Cæsar* was expected in a few Hours at the Gates of *Utica*, a Town not maintainable against *Cæsar's* Army, as we may learn by the very first Lines of the Play.

*The Dawn is overcast, the Morning low'rs,  
And heavily in Clouds brings on the Day,  
The great, th' important Day; big with the  
Fate*

*Of Cato and of Rome.*

For how could that Day be big with the Fate of *Cato* and of *Rome*, if *Utica* were in a Capacity to hold out a Siege against the Arms of *Cæsar*?

But, Sir, let us consider the Manner of speaking in this Assembly. As soon as *Cato* proposes the Business of Peace or War, *Sempronius* rises, and declares for the latter; when *Cato* immediately contradicts him without staying to see if the rest of the Senators were of his Opinion; which is contrary to the Method of all Councils, either those of *Parnassus* or those of the World, because such a Proceeding is not consonant to Reason nor to the Design of convening such Assemblies.

Z

For

For the very Design of convening such Assemblies, and of asking their Advice, is, that every Man who is ask'd it, should give it sincerely and without Prepossession. Now is it not plain, Sir, that if he who has the supream Authority in a Council declares his Opinion before the rest, they who speak after him are in some measure byass'd?

But now let us come to the Speeches themselves, and let us begin with *Cato's*.

*Fathers, we once again are met in Council;  
Cæsar's Approach has summon'd us together,  
And Rome attends her Fate from our Resolves:*

*How shall we treat this bold aspiring Man?  
Success still follows him, and backs his Crimes:  
Pharſalia gave him Rome; Egypt has since  
Receiv'd his Yoke, and the whole Nile is  
Cæsar's.*

*Why should I mention Juba's Overthrow,  
And Scipio's Death? Numidia's burning  
Sands*

*Still smoak with Blood. 'Tis time we should  
decree*

*What Course to take. Our Foe advances on us,  
And envies us ev'n Libya's sultry Desarts  
Fathers, pronounce your Thoughts, are they  
still fixt*

*To hold it out, and fight it to the last?*



*Or are your Hearts subdu'd at length, and  
wrought  
By Time and ill Success to a Submission?*

We will begin to examine this Speech by the *Tayl*; for 'tis not till the four last Lines that *Cato* puts the Question to this mock Senate, whether they were for Peace or War, which is putting a wrong Question. For as long as they had a Ressource, and the Affairs of the Commonwealth were not desperate, as appears by what *Cato* and *Juba* say in the sequel, all true Patriots ought to be for War; and the only Question which could be put properly to them, was, since *Cesar* approached, and *Utica* was not maintainable by their Forces, against his numerous and victorious Army, to what Places they should immediately retreat, and where they might best and soonest recruit their Forces. All the first part of the Speech is Declamation, and telling his Hearers, tho' neither he nor they had a Minute to lose, *Cesar* being expected every Hour, what either was not true, or what they must every one of them know every Jot as well as himself. Besides, could any thing be so little to his Purpose, as that at this extraordinary Juncture, which required that he should use all his Art and all his Force to animate them, he should remind them thus of the Felicity and the constant Success of *Cesar*,

Z 2

and

and enumerate the Battels he had gain'd, and the Countries he had conquered, which was enough to make them lose all Courage and incline them to a base Submission? If it has not that Effect on *Sempronius*, 'tis because he is a Traitor, and does not speak his Mind; that by persuading *Cato* to hold out, he may have the Merit of delivering him up to *Cæsar*. Being ordered then by *Cato* to declare his Opinion, he delivers it in the following Speech, which is intended by the Author as a *Gasconnade*.

*Semp. My Voice is still for War.  
Gods! can a Roman Senate long debate  
Which of the two to chuse, Slav'ry or Death!  
No, let us rise at once, gird on our Swords,  
And, at the Head of our remaining Troops,  
Attack the Foe, break thro' the thick Array  
Of his throng'd Legions, and charge home  
upon him.  
Perhaps some Arm, more lucky than the rest,  
May reach his Heart, and free the World  
from Bondage.*

This, as I said before, is design'd by the Author as a *Gasconnade*. But 'tis only its being in the wrong Place that makes it so. For if this Speech had been spoke after *Cato* had declar'd against both making Peace and retreating, it had been great and reasonable, and *Roman*. For this Advice of  
Sem-

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*Sempronius* is wrong, because the Forces in *Utica* could before the Arrival of *Cæsar* make a Retreat and recruit. But after Refusal to make Peace and to make a Retreat, there remain'd but two things, either to go out and fight, or to stay there till they were coop'd up by *Cæsar*. To stay there was foolish and desperate; for *Cæsar* might be certain to reduce them by Famine, without suffering them so much as to strike a Stroke. If they went out and fought, they had a Chance for it, tho' the odds was very great against them.

*Perhaps some Arm, more lucky than the rest,  
May reach his Heart, and free the World  
from Bondage.*

So that *Cato* having resolved neither to make Peace nor to retreat, was oblig'd by Reason to follow this Advice of *Sempronius*. Let us now see what Reasons he gives for his not doing it.

*Cato. Let not a Torrent of impetuous Zeal  
Transport thee thus beyond the Bounds of  
Reason.*

*True Fortitude is seen in great Exploits  
That Justice warrants, and that Wisdom  
guides;*

*All else is tow'ring Frenzy and Distraction.  
Are not the Lives of those, who draw the  
Sword*



*In Rome's defence, entrusted to our Care?  
Should we thus lead them to a Field of Slaugh-  
ter,  
Might not th' impartial World with Reason  
say,  
We lavish'd at our Deaths the Blood of thou-  
sands,  
To grace our Fall, and make our Ruine glo-  
rious?*

Why no: The World could not with rea-  
son say, that he lavish'd at his Death the  
Blood of thousands, for doing a reason-  
able thing, that is by leading them out to  
fight against the Enemies of their Country,  
by which they had a Chance for the Victo-  
ry, after he had resolv'd within himself  
neither to make Peace nor retreat. The  
World might reasonably say, that

*He lavish'd at his Death the Blood of thou-  
sands  
To grace his Fall, and make his Ruine glo-  
rious,*

by basely deserting them; that is, by dying  
alone, by dying by his own Hand, with-  
out making a fair Retreat with them, or  
making any Terms for them, or fighting  
bravely at the Head of them. If he had  
fall'n in the Field at the Head of them, and  
the Deaths of thousands had attended on  
his,

his, it would have been so far from making his Ruine glorious, that it would have obscur'd it, and would have render'd the Fall of *Cato* a vulgar Fall, and common to those numerous Chiefs, who in the several Ages of the World have been known to fall in Battel. *Cato* knew very well, that to grace his Fall, and render his Ruine glorious with the unthinking part of the World, both with his Contemporaries and with Posterity, that the Singularity of his Fall was requisite; that in order to this there was a Necessity for his falling alone, for his falling by his own Hand, after having twice read over *Plato's* Treatise of the Immortality of the Soul.

But now, Sir, as *Sempronius* is in the wrong in declaring for War, before he knew that *Cato* had resolv'd neither to make Peace nor make a Retreat; as *Cato* is more in the wrong in answering him; let us now shew that *Lucius* is still more in the wrong in the Harangue which he makes for Peace; and *Cato* still more in the wrong than he, in the Answer which he makes to that Harangue.

*Lucius.* My Thoughts, I must confess, are turn'd on Peace.

Already have our Quarrels fill'd the World  
With Widows and with Orphans. Scythia  
mourns

*Our guilty Wars, and Earth's remotest Regions*

*Lie half unpeopled by the Feuds of Rome:  
'Tis time to sheath the Sword, and spare Mankind.*

*It is not Cæsar, but the Gods, my Fathers,  
The Gods declare against us, and repel  
Our vain Attempts: To urge the Foe to Bat-*  
*tel,*

*(Prompted by blind Revenge and wild Despair,)*

*Were to refuse th' Awards of Providence,  
And not to rest in Heav'n's Determination.  
Already have we shewn our Love to Rome,  
Now let us shew Submission to the Gods.*

The first six Lines of this Speech contain nothing but a meer poetical Flourish, And for these two that follow;

*It is not Cæsar, but the Gods, my Fathers,  
The Gods declare against us, and repel  
Our vain Attempts.*

May we not reasonably say, that they are the Language of Baseneis, that it would be more Philosophical as well as more *Roman* to say, that the Gods have only tryed them all this while, to try with what Constancy they would bear their Sufferings and endure their Losses, and whether they were worthy



worthy to be made the Deliverers of their Country. But let us proceed,

*To urge the Foe to Battel,*

*(Prompted by blind Revenge and wild Despair)*

*Were to refuse th' Awards of Providence,  
And not to rest in Heav'n's Determination.*

Thus is this Fool in the other Extream, as if there were no medium, between urging the Foe to immediate Battel, and a base Submission. *Cato* will tell him in his Answer that there is that medium, but will tell it him after such a manner, that he had better have said nothing.

*Cato. Fathers, I cannot see that our Affairs*

*Are grown thus desp'rate. We have Bulwarks round us;*

*Within our Walls are Troops enured to Toil  
In Africk's Heats, and season'd to the Sun;  
Numidia's spacious Kingdom lies behind us,  
Ready to rise at its young Prince's Call.*

Thus *Cato* is sensible, that there is a medium between urging the Foe to immediate Battel, and a base Submission. There is a retreat into *Numidia*, where they may repair and recruit their Forces, and then  
it

it will be time to offer Battel, and therefore this Stoick justly cries out,

*While there is Hope, do not distrust the Gods.*

But what Inference does he draw from hence? why, the strangest one in the World.

*While there is Hope, do not distrust the Gods;  
But wait at least till Cæsar's near Approach  
Force us to yield.*

That is as much as to say, Since we have so fair a Retreat into *Numidia*, whose spacious Kingdom does as it were extend its Arms to receive us; why in the Name of all the Gods e'en let us stay here. But let us suffer him to go on,

*'Twill never be too late  
To sue for Chains, and own a Conqueror.  
Why should Rome fall a Moment ere her  
time?*

*No, let us draw her Term of Freedom out  
In its full Length, and spin it to the last.*

But now, Sir, is that the way to spin the Freedom of *Rome* to the last, to stay till they are coop'd up in *Utica*, instead of retreating into *Numidia*, where they may raise another Army, with which they may  
once

once more contend for the Liberties of their Country. But let him make an end of this blessed Harangue.

*So shall we gain still one Day's Liberty;  
And let me perish, but, in Cato's Judgment,  
A Day, an Hour of virtuous Liberty,  
Is worth a whole Eternity in Bondage.*

Why let it be so; but then if a Day, if an Hour of virtuous Liberty be of such immense Value, sure an Age, or many Ages of it are infinitely more to be esteem'd. And why they should talk of adding a Day to the Liberties of *Rome*, when they may reasonably hope to add whole Ages, by retreating into a vast Kingdom, which lies open to receive them, is I must confess above my Apprehension.

But, Sir, tho' I have not quite done with this Scene of the Senate, yet give me leave here to insert a Passage of the following Scene between *Cato* and *Juba*, in order to shew that whereas those old Stagers, *Sempronius* and *Lucius*, made, the one of them an extravagant Proposal, and the other a base one; young *Juba*, who in all likelihood was never in the sight before, yet gives very reasonable Advice to *Cato* in the following Lines.

*Had*



*Had we not better leave this Utica,  
To arm Numidia in our Cause, and court  
Th' Assistance of my Father's pow'rful  
Friends?*

*Did they know Cato, our remotest Kings  
Wou'd pour embattled Multitudes about him;  
Their swarthy Hosts wou'd darken all our  
Plains,  
Doubling the native Horrour of the War,  
And making Death more grim.*

To which reasonable Advice we shall see  
immediately, that *Cato* gives a most unrea-  
sonable Answer.

*Cato. And canst thou think  
Cato will fly before the Sword of Cæsar?  
Reduced like Hannibal, to seek Relief  
From Court to Court, and wander up and  
down,  
A Vagabond in Africk!*

Which is as much as to say, I confess that  
'tis true, by retreating immediately from  
*Utica*, I may have an opportunity of re-  
cruiting my little Army in *Numidia*, and  
rendring it still more pow'rful than it was at  
*Thapsus*, and that consequently I may have  
yet another opportunity of consulting the  
Safety of my Friends, and retrieving their  
Interest, and their Pow'r; and may yet once  
more

more be in a Condition of contending for the Liberties of *Rome*, and of Mankind ; yet rather than make this Retreat, which may look little in the Eyes of the unthinking Part of the World ; I, who pretend so much concern for my Friends, and so much Love for my Country, will rather suffer my Country to sink, and my Friends to perish. But for God sake, Sir, why this Aversion now from flying before the Sword of *Cesar* ? Who was it that flew from *Pharsalia* to *Africa* before the Sword of *Cesar* ? Was it not this very *Cato* ? But pray, Sir, what does he, what can he mean by

*Reduced like Hannibal, to seek Relief  
From Court to Court ?*

Could he not have brought a nearer, and a *Roman* Example, to justifie and to sustain his Retreat ? Did not the Great *Pompey* after his Flight from *Pharsalia* seek Relief in *Africa*, and seek Relief which he was not sure to find ? Shall *Cato* after this refuse to seek certain Relief in *Numidia*, a Relief so necessary for the Preservation of his Friends, and for the Support of sinking Liberty ? But what can be the meaning of

*wander up and down,  
A Vagabond in Africk !*

Did

Did not the Great *Pompey* wander more like a Vagabond from *Pharsalia* to *Ægypt*, being accompanied but by few, as Vagabonds are often accompanied? whereas *Cato* might be attended by Thousands, by all the remains of the Forces in *Utica*, whose Lives he might secure by his Retreat, and whose Deaths he would certainly lavish by his Stay. Which is prov'd by Fact, and by the Event, for *Cæsar* hang'd as many of these worthy Senators as afterwards fell into his hands.

But now 'tis time to go back to the Senate, and to shew that, upon the arrival of *Decius*, *Cato* makes a more unreasonable and extravagant Proposal, than either *Lucius* or *Sempronius* made before him.

*Decius.* *Cæsar* is well acquainted with  
your Virtues,  
And therefore sets this Value on your Life.  
Let him but know the Price of *Cato's* Friendship,  
And name your Terms.

*Cato.* Bid him disband his Legions,  
Restore the Common-wealth to Liberty,  
Submit his Actions to the publick Censure,  
And stand the Judgment of a Roman Senate.  
Bid him do this, and *Cato* is his Friend.

Now here, Sir, give me leave to ask one Question; Did *Cato* believe that *Cæsar*

wou



would comply with this Proposal, or did he certainly know that he would reject it? If he believ'd that he would comply with it, must not this Stoick be Weakness it self? If he certainly knew that he would reject it, why then is this a Brave and a *Roman* Proposal, or a Frantick and Extravagant one? May not we here retort upon *Cato*, what he himself said before to *Sempronius*?

*Let not a Torrent of impetuous Zeal  
Transport thee thus beyond the Bounds of  
Reason:*

*True Fortitude is seen in great Exploits  
That Justice warrants, and that Wisdom  
guides.*

Is this a Proposal that Wisdom guides? And does not *Decius* in the following Line very justly reproach him, with acting so contrary to his known Character?

*Decius. Cato, the World talks loudly of  
your Wisdom——*

Is not this so far from being Wise, that it is downright Ridiculous in one, who will do nothing to obtain his Demands, neither fight bravely, nor Retreat prudently, nor propose any probable Conditions of Peace?

Thus, Sir, in compliance with your Desire, I have recollected, and sent you, the chief

chief Things which I had formerly remark'd upon the Sentiments of the two first Acts of *Cato*. What was chiefly to be observ'd upon the Sentiments of the other three Acts, fell in with the Method of the Remarks, which I formerly publish'd on that Tragedy.

I should now go back to the Scene in the first Act, between *Juba* and *Syphax*, and say something concerning that Pride which *Syphax* objects against *Cato*. But this Letter being already swell'd to too great a Bulk, I shall omit it 'till the next Opportunity.

*I am,*

*'S I R,*

*Your, &c.*



On the Sentiments of CATO.

LETTER VII.

S I R,

I Shall now, according to my Promise, make an end of these Remarks, by going back to the Scene in the first Act between *Juba* and *Syphax*. In that Scene, *Juba* boasts to *Syphax* of the Pow'r that *Cato* has to resist Pleasure; *Syphax* answers that the Abstinence of his *Numidian* Hunters is as extraordinary as that of *Cato*; to which *Juba* replies.

*Juba.* *Thy Prejudices, Syphax, won't discern*

*What Virtues grow from Ignorance, and Choice,*

*Nor how the Hero differs from the Brute.*

*But grant that others could with equal Glory*

*Look down on Pleasures, and the Baits of Sense;*

*Where shall we find the Man that bears Affliction,*

A a

Great



*Great and Majestick in his Griefs, like Cato?*

*Heav'ns with what Strength, what Steadiness of Mind,*

*He triumphs in the midst of all his Suff'rings!  
How does he rise against a Load of Woes,  
And thank the Gods that throw the Weight  
upon him!*

Now here I desire leave, Sir, to make one Observation by the bye. The Author makes this young *African* affirm implicitly here, that 'tis harder to bear Affliction than to resist Pleasure; whereas there are two Principles innate in us, the one of which enables us to bear Affliction, and the other inclines us to submit to Pleasure; the one of which is Pride, and the other the ardent Desire of Happiness; and therefore *Roche foucault* is in the right in his 29th Reflection *Il faut des plus grand Virtus pour soutenir la bonne Fortune que la mauvaise.* But now, Sir, I come to the chief thing of which I design'd to treat in this Letter, and that is the Pride of *Cato*. Let us see then what *Syphax* says to *Cato's* Firmness under Affliction.

*Syph. 'Tis Pride, rank Pride, and Haughtiness of Soul.*

Now

Now here I would ask the Author one Question. Did he design this Assertion of *Syphax* for Truth or Slander? If he design'd it for Truth, there is an end at once of all his Heroe's Virtue; if he design'd it for Slander, why then I desire leave to tell him, that he has drawn his Hero so unhappily, that what he design'd for Slander is apparently true, for in the latter end of that Scene of the second Act where *Decius* appears, *Cato* does not only think himself the greatest and most deserving of Mankind, but is so foolishly vain and so intolerably insolent as to declare it to all about him.

*Dec. Does Cato send this Answer back  
to Cæsar,*

*For all his generous Cares and proffer'd  
Friendship?*

*Cato. His Cares for me are insolent and  
vain:*

*Presumptuous Man! The Gods take Care  
of Cato.*

*Wou'd Cæsar shew the Greatness of his Soul?*

*Bid him employ his Care for these my  
Friends,*

*And make good use of his ill-gotten Pow'r,  
By sheltring Men much better than himself.*

Which is as much as to say, *Cæsar* shews  
Insolence and Vanity in taking Care of me,  
but he would shew the Greatness of his Soul

in taking care of these Scoundrels here about me, who are as much better than him, as I am better than they are. Now is not this to say in plain *English*, As long as the Gods take care of me, let the Devil take care of my Friends here. For has not he painted *Cæsar*, but six lines before this, as black as any modern can paint the Devil?

*Didst thou but view him right, thou'dst see  
him black*

*With Murder, Treason, Sacrilege, and Crimes,  
That strike my Soul with Horror but to name  
em.*

And so much for the Pride of *Cato*; at least at present. And now, Sir, let us return to what *Juba* said a little above, and take Occasion from it to make one more Remark.

*Where shall we find the Man that bears  
Affliction,*

*Great and Majestick in his Grievs, like Cato?  
Heav'ns with what Strength, what Steadiness of Mind,*

*He triumphs in the midst of all his Suff'rings  
How does he rise against a Load of Woes  
And thank the Gods that throw the Weight  
upon him!*



Now the Truth of the Matter is, that *Cato* shew'd less Strength and Steadiness in his Affliction, than any of the conquer'd *Romans* who fled to *Spain*, that they might reserve themselves for better Times, and have one glorious Tryal for Liberty more. He was so far from rising under the Load, that he impiously threw down the Burden, and by poorly dying before the Word of Command, acted the Part of a cowardly Soldier, who flies from the Post where his General has plac'd him, and leaves his Buckler behind him.

Thus, Sir, have I sent you what remain'd to be said concerning the Sentiments of *Cato*. Some of my Friends have importun'd me to say something of the Expression and the Harmony; which I shall do my utmost Endeavour to decline,

*I am, S I R,*

Jan. 15. 1717.

*Your, &c.*

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To the Right Honourable the

Earl of *HALIFAX*.

My LORD,

**W**HEN I heard of the new Honours with which the King had distinguish'd your Merit and acknowledg'd your Services, there was not one of your Lordship's humble Servants who receiv'd the happy Tidings with more Joy than my self. If any thing temper'd that Joy, it was the Concern that I was not able to wait on your Lordship to congratulate you, so soon as the rest.

If ever I can be able to do important Service to my Country, which has been all along the darling Passion of my Life, it must be under your Lordship's Administration. For I never yet could attend upon any Minister of State with Inclination and Pleasure but your self. If your Lordship will grant me the Honour, from time to time

to let me write my Thoughts freely to you,  
I shall endeavour to manage that Privilege  
with so much Discretion, that your Lord-  
ship shall not repent of it; and I shall not  
be utterly in Despair of doing some Service  
to the Publick.

*I am,*

Oct. 28.  
1714.

*My LORD,*

*Your Lordship's most Oblig'd, and*

*most Humble, Faithful Servant.*





Journal of the Rev. Mr. [illegible]

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LETTERS

ON THE

Genius *and* Writings

OF

SHAKESPEAR.

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LETTERS

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TO

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To the Right Honourable

GEORGE GRANVILLE, *Esq;*

Secretary at WAR,

SIR,

**A**N Address of this nature, made upon your Advancement to one of the principal Employments of the State, and made by one who has had the Honour to be known to you so many Tears, might be pretended by malicious People to be a Homage rather to your Fortune and Power, than a due Respect to your Merit and Virtue; if it were not publickly known, that I formerly applied my self to you in the same manner, when you were much more distinguished by Merit and Virtue, than by Fortune and Power.

But if any one farther maliciously urges, that, even when I formerly applied my self to you, by the distinguishing Qualities of your Mind and Person, I foresaw your Fortune and Power; to him I answer, in order to vindicate the Reputation of my Sincerity and my Disinterestedness, that tho' I saw  
very

LETTERS

ON THE

Genius and Writings

OF

SHAKESPEARE

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Secretary at WAR,

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very



## Epistle Dedicatory.

very well that those great Qualities fitted Mr. Granville for the most illustrious Employments; yet who could have ever imagin'd that any Man living had Merit enough to raise him in spight of so many unfortunate Virtues with which that Merit was attended, in spight of not only a true Poetical Genius, but a Frankness, a Probity, a matchless Integrity, a Sincerity worthy of Heroick Times, and a most untainted Honour?

But tho' your Character were less conspicuous, and what I had formerly done were intirely forgot, the numerous and powerful Obligations I have to you, would more than justify this Address; and the omitting the first Opportunity of making you a publick Acknowledgment would look like black Ingratitude. You have taken such Care of my Interest with others at a most seasonable Conjunction, and have your self made me a Present so noble, and so extraordinary, at a time when I stood most in need of it, that how few alive have Spirit and Magnanimity to do any thing like it? At least I defy any one to name that living Man, who in a private Capacity has done any thing like it.

I know very well indeed that you are very far from desiring such a publick Acknowledgment, that you aim at nothing by doing daily good, but the God-like Pleasure which results from your Actions; and that others

per-

## Epistle Dedicatory.

perhaps may censure me for sacrificing your Modesty to my own Vanity. For to publish to the World that I have been oblig'd in an extraordinary manner by a Person so universally esteem'd and distinguish'd, that one of the very few Things in which the most violent of both Parties agree, is the Character of Mr. Granville, will be thought to be the Result of uncommon Vanity, by those who have not Goodness enough to believe it to be the Effect of a lively Gratitude.

But tho', Sir, I had no Obligation to you, and you had no other Merit but that of perfectly understanding an Art which you have perfectly practis'd, viz. the Art which is the Subject of the following Treatise, that Treatise would be by Right of Nature yours. For to whom can an Essay upon the Genius and Writings of Shakespear be so properly address'd, as to him who best understands Shakespear, and who has most improv'd him? I would not give this just Encomium to the Jew of Venice, if I were not convinc'd from a long Experience of the Penetration and Force of your Judgment, that no Exaltation can make you ashamed of your former noble Art; that you know it to be a Weakness barely to imagine, that the most noble and most exalted of all Arts, and the most difficult to excel in, can render a Man less qualified for publick Business, or  
for

## Epistle Dedicatory.

*for the first Employments of the State; that all the great Statesmen who have best succeeded in Affairs of Government, have either writ Poems, or Treatises concerning Poetry. The most ancient of Historians and Legislators, Moses, at least of those whose Laws and Histories remain, has given us a pathetick and a lofty Poem upon the Passage of the Red Sea.*

*The Athenian Legislator Solon thought it not in the least below his Dignity to render Moral Virtue lovely by the Charm of Verse. And Lacedemonian Lycurgus, even the rigid and the austere Lycurgus, thought it an Employment worthy of his Wisdom and Virtue, to restore and publish the immortal Works of Homer: Having the same Opinion of that Prince of Poets that Horace afterwards had; that his Poems would better instruct Mankind in Virtue than they could be possibly taught by Prose. The most illustrious Writers of Politicks among the Grecians, Plato and Aristotle; one of them had a figurative, a lofty and a Poetick Prose; and the other, who may be call'd the Legislator of Parnassus, wrote the Laws of Tragedy so exactly and so truly in Reason and Nature, that succeeding Criticks have writ justly and reasonably upon that Art no farther than they have adhered to their great Master's Notions. Tacitus, the very Oracle of*

*Mo-*



## Epistle Dedicatory.

*Modern Statesmen, has a Stile that is warm, and daring, and figurative, that is to say Poetick. Machiavel the Prince of Modern Politicians, if we except but one of our own Country-men, wrote more than one Comedy; and more than one Poem has been attempted by our British Politician Harrington. The two Princes of Poets may easily be proved to've been great Statesmen; Homer particularly made choice of a Moral, which in his Time, when Greece with the Islands of the Ægæan was divided into petty Sovereignities, was the fundamental Maxim of their Politicks and their true Interest; which Moral was, as Sallust afterwards express'd it, Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt, Discordiâ maxima dilabuntur; from whose noblest Poem you formerly gave us a Tragedy, in which, in Imitation of Homer, you are daring yet just, fiery yet regular, sublime yet natural and perspicuous, chaste yet alluring, and easie yet strong and powerful.*

*But to come to the more active Part of Government, the greatest Monarchs and Captains and Ministers of State that ever were known in the World, either were or would have been great Poets. When Athens flourish'd in all her Glory, their Poets and their famous Writers were they who directed their Counsels, and led their Armies*  
to

## Epistle Dedicatory.

to Battel. Alexander read nothing but the Works of Homer while he conquer'd the Orient. In Rome, the greatest Captain that flourish'd in the Time of the Commonwealth vouchsafed his Assistance to a Comick Poet: And the two first Cæsars were proud to write Tragedies with those fatal Hands that were victorious over the Universe. Mecænas, at the Time that he was first Minister to the Emperor of the World, was not only the greatest Patron of the Muses that ever was, but endeavour'd to be himself a Poet. If we descend to Mordern Times, Richlieu, who laid the Foundation of the French Greatness, wrote more than one Dramatick Poem, with that very right Hand which dictated to the Cabinets of so many Sovereign Princes, and directed the successful Motions of so many conquering Commanders. And that Greatness, which upon a French Poetick Foundation was in the Space of less than one Century rais'd to an insupportable Height, was in less than twenty Years sapp'd and undermin'd and overturn'd by a British Poetick Ministry: It being undeniable, that several of the Persons who made the chief Figures in both the old and the new Ministry were Poets. I make no doubt, Sir, but the time will come when you will be distinguish'd by the  
Wisdom

## Epistle Dedicatory.

Wisdom and Reach of your Counsels, as much as you were formerly by the Spirit and Hustness of your Writings. For the very Virtues which we once were afraid would hinder your Advancement even in the most virtuous Court, are now like to preserve and support your Interest since you have had an Opportunity of publickly practising them so long. 'Tis impossible to behold that Ardor, that Sincerity and that Alacrity, with which you every Day endeavour to do good to your Fellow-Creatures, without loving you, and without wishing, as well as hoping, that you may be the peculiar Care of Providence, which by advancing you to one of the most eminent Stations would provide for Thousands. But when we behold that Ardor, and that Alacrity, attended with such an attractive Sweetness, and such a manly Grace, and with a Nobility which God and Nature seem to have imprinted both on your Mind and Person, we have no longer Power over our selves, but give up all our Affections to you; and not only wish, but firmly believe that since God and Nature have given you those several Excellencies which were the undoubted Original of all Political Nobility, they have determin'd you to succeed to the most extensive Fortunes and Titles of your Noble Ancestors;



## Epistle Dedicatory.

*cestors; which is warmly desir'd and earnestly expected by all who have the Honour to know you, but more especially by,*

**S I R,**

**Your most Oblig'd,**

**most Humble, and**

**most Faithful Servant,**

**JOHN DENNIS.**

*On the Genius and Writings of*  
SHAKESPEAR.

To Mr. ———

LETTER I.

S I R,

Feb. 1. 17<sup>10</sup><sub>11</sub>.

I Here send you the Tragedy of *Coriolanus*, which I have alter'd from the Original of *Shakespear*, and with it a short Account of the Genius and Writings of that Author, both which you desired me to send to you the last time I had the good Fortune to see you. But I send them both upon this condition, that you will with your usual Sincerity tell me your Sentiments both of the Poem and of the Criticism.

*Shakespear* was one of the greatest Genius's that the World e'er saw for the Tragick Stage. Tho' he lay under greater Disadvantages than any of his Successors, yet had he greater and more genuine Beauties than the best and greatest of them. And what makes the brightest Glory of his Character,

racter, those Beauties were entirely his own, and owing to the Force of his own Nature; whereas his Faults were owing to his Education, and to the Age that he liv'd in. One may say of him as they did of *Homer*, that he had none to imitate, and is himself inimitable. His Imaginations were often as just, as they were bold and strong. He had a natural Discretion which never cou'd have been taught him, and his Judgment was strong and penetrating. He seems to have wanted nothing but Time and Leisure for Thought, to have found out those Rules of which he appears so ignorant. His Characters are always drawn justly, exactly, graphically, except where he fail'd by not knowing History or the Poetical Art. He has for the most part more fairly distinguish'd them than any of his Successors have done, who have falsified them, or confounded them, by making Love the predominant Quality in all. He had so fine a Talent for touching the Passions, and they are so lively in him, and so truly in Nature, that they often touch us more without their due Preparations, than those of other Tragick Poets, who have all the Beauty of Design and all the Advantage of Incidents. His Master-Passion was Terror, which he has often mov'd so powerfully and so wonderfully, that we may justly conclude, that if he had had the Advantage of Art and Learning



ing, he wou'd have surpass'd the very best and strongest of the Ancients. His Paintings are often so beautiful and so lively, so graceful and so powerful, especially where he uses them in order to move Terror; that there is nothing perhaps more accomplish'd in our *English* Poetry. His Sentiments for the most part in his best Tragedies, are noble, generous, easie and natural, and adapted to the Persons who use them. His Expression is in many Places good and pure after a hundred Years; simple tho' elevated, graceful tho' bold, and easie tho' strong. He seems to have been the very Original of our *English* Tragical Harmony; that is the Harmony of Blank Verse, diversifyed often by Dissyllable and Trissyllable Terminations. For that Diversity distinguishes it from Heroick Harmony, and bringing it nearer to common Use, makes it more proper to gain Attention, and more fit for Action and Dialogue. Such Verse we make when we are writing Prose; we make such Verse in common Conversation.

If *Shakespear* had these great Qualities by Nature, what would he not have been, if he had join'd to so happy a Genius Learning and the Poetical Art. For want of the latter, our Author has sometimes made gross Mistakes in the Characters which he has drawn from History, against the Equality

and Conveniency of Manners of his Dramatical Persons. Witness *Menenius* in the following Tragedy, whom he has made an errant Buffoon, which is a great Absurdity. For he might as well have imagin'd a grave majestick *Jack-Pudding*, as a Buffoon in a *Roman* Senator. *Aufidius* the General of the *Volscians* is shewn a base and a profligate Villain. He has offended against the Equality of the Manners even in his Hero himself. For *Coriolanus* who in the first part of the Tragedy is shewn so open, so frank, so violent, and so magnanimous, is represented in the latter part by *Aufidius*, which is contradicted by no one, a flattering, fawning, cringing, insinuating Traytor.

For want of this Poetical Art, *Shakespear* has introduced things into his Tragedies, which are against the Dignity of that noble Poem, as the Rabblè in *Julius Caesar*, and that in *Coriolanus*; tho' that in *Coriolanus* offends not only against the Dignity of Tragedy, but against the Truth of History likewise, and the Customs of Ancient *Rome*, and the Majesty of the *Roman* People, as we shall have occasion to shew anon.

For want of this Art, he has made his Incidents less moving, less surprizing, and less wonderful. He has been so far from seeking those fine Occasions to move with which an Action furnish'd according to Art would have furnish'd him; that he  
seems

seems rather to have industriously avoided them. He makes *Coriolanus*, upon his Sentence of Banishment, take his leave of his Wife and his Mother out of sight of the Audience, and so has purposely as it were avoided a great occasion to move.

If we are willing to allow, that *Shakespeare* by sticking to the bare Events of History, has mov'd more than any of his Successors, yet his just Admirers must confess, that if he had had the Poetical Art, he would have mov'd ten times more. For 'tis impossible that by a bare Historical Play he could move so much as he would have done by a Fable.

We find that a Romance entertains the generality of Mankind with more Satisfaction than History, if they read only to be entertain'd; but if they read History thro' Pride or Ambition, they bring their Passions along with them, and that alters the case. Nothing is more plain than that even in an Historical Relation some Parts of it, and some Events, please more than others. And therefore a Man of Judgment, who sees why they do so, may in forming a Fable, and disposing an Action, please more than an Historian can do. For the just Fiction of a Fable moves us more than an Historical Relation can do, for the two following Reasons: First, by reason of the Communication and mutual Dependence



dence of its Parts. For if Passion springs from Motion, then the Obstruction of that Motion or a counter Motion must obstruct and check the Passion: And therefore an Historian and a Writer of Historical Plays passing from Events of one nature to Events of another nature without a due Preparation, must of necessity stifle and confound one Passion by another. The second Reason why the Fiction of a Fable pleases us more, than an Historical Relation can do, is, because in an Historical Relation we seldom are acquainted with the true Causes of Events, whereas in a feign'd Action which is duly constituted, that is, which has a just beginning, those Causes always appear. For 'tis observable, that both in a Poetical Fiction and an Historical Relation, those Events are the most entertaining, the most surprizing, and the most wonderful, in which Providence most plainly appears. And 'tis for this Reason that the Author of a just Fable, must please more than the Writer of an Historical Relation. The Good must never fail to prosper, and the Bad must be always punish'd: Otherwise the Incidents, and particularly the Catastrophe which is the grand Incident, are liable to be imputed rather to Chance, than to Almighty Conduct and to Sovereign Justice. The want of this impartial Distribution of Justice makes the

*Coriolanus*

*Coriolanus* of *Shakespear* to be without Moral. 'Tis true indeed *Coriolanus* is kill'd by those Foreign Enemies with whom he had openly sided against his Country, which seems to be an Event worthy of Providence, and would look as if it were contriv'd by infinite Wisdom, and executed by supreme Justice, to make *Coriolanus* a dreadful Example to all who lead on Foreign Enemies to the Invasion of their native Country; if there were not something in the Fate of the other Characters, which gives occasion to doubt of it, and which suggests to the Sceptical Reader that this might happen by accident. For *Aufidius* the principal Murderer of *Coriolanus*, who in cold Blood gets him assassinated by Ruffians, instead of leaving him to the Law of the Country, and the Justice of the *Volscian* Senate, and who commits so black a Crime, not by any erroneous Zeal, or a mistaken publick Spirit, but thro' Jealousy, Envy, and inveterate Malice; this Assassinator not only survives, and survives unpunish'd, but seems to be rewarded for so detestable an Action; by engrossing all those Honours to himself which *Coriolanus* before had shar'd with him. But not only *Aufidius*, but the *Roman* Tribunes, *Sicinius* and *Brutus*, appear to me to cry aloud for Poetick Vengeance. For they are guilty of two Faults, neither of which ought to go unpunish'd: The first in procuring the Banishment

nishment of *Coriolanus*. If they were really jealous, that *Coriolanus* had a Design on their Liberties, when he stood for the Consulship, it was but just that they should give him a Repulse; but to get the Champion and Defender of their Country banish'd upon a pretended Jealousy was a great deal too much, and could proceed from nothing but that Hatred and Malice which they had conceiv'd against him, for opposing their Institution. Their second Fault lay in procuring this Sentence by indirect Methods, by exasperating and inflaming the People by Artifices and Insinuations, by taking a base Advantage of the Open-heartedness and Violence of *Coriolanus*, and by oppressing him with a Sophistical Argument, that he aim'd at Sovereignty, because he had not delivered into the Publick Treasury the Spoils which he had taken from the *Antiates*. As if a Design of Sovereignty could be reasonably concluded from any one Act; or any one could think of bringing to pass such a Design, by eternally favouring the Patricians, and disobliging the Populace. For we need make no doubt, but that it was among the young Patricians that *Coriolanus* distributed the Spoils which were taken from the *Antiates*; whereas nothing but caressing the Populace could enslave the *Roman* People, as *Cæsar* afterwards very well saw and experienc'd. So that this Injustice of the Tribunes was the original



original Cause of the Calamity which afterwards befel their Country, by the Invasion of the *Volscians*, under the Conduct of *Coriolanus*. And yet these Tribunes at the end of the Play, like *Aufidius*, remain unpunish'd. But indeed *Shakespear* has been wanting in the exact Distribution of Poetical Justice not only in his *Coriolanus*, but in most of his best Tragedies, in which the Guilty and the Innocent perish promiscuously; as *Duncan* and *Banquo* in *Macbeth*, as likewise Lady *Macduffe* and her Children; *Desdemona* in *Othello*; *Cordelia*, *Kent*, and King *Lear*, in the Tragedy that bears his Name; *Bru-tus* and *Porcia* in *Julius Caesar*, and young *Hamlet* in the Tragedy of *Hamlet*. For tho' it may said in Defence of the last, that *Hamlet* had a Design to kill his Uncle who then reign'd; yet this is justify'd by no less than a Call from Heaven, and raising up one from the Dead to urge him to it. The Good and the Bad then perishing promiscuously in the best of *Shakespear's* Tragedies, there can be either none or very weak Instruction in them: For such promiscuous Events call the Government of Providence into Question, and by Scepticks and Libertines are resolv'd into Chance. I humbly conceive therefore that this want of Dramatical Justice in the Tragedy of *Coriolanus*, gave occasion for a just Alteration, and that I was oblig'd to sacrifice to that Justice

*Aufidius*

*Aufidius* and the Tribunes, as well as *Coriolanus*.

Thus have we endeavour'd to shew, that for want of the Poetical Art, *Shakespeare* lay under very great Disadvantages. At the same time we must own to his Honour, that he has often perform'd Wonders without it, in spite of the Judgment of so great a Man as *Horace*.

*Naturâ fieret laudabile carmen, an arte,  
Quæsitum est: ego nec studium sinè divite  
venâ,* [rius sic

*Nec rude quid proffit video ingenium; alte-  
Altera poscit opem res, & conjurat amicé.*

But from this very Judgment of *Horace* we may justly conclude, that *Shakespeare* would have wonderfully surpass'd himself if Art had been join'd to Nature. There never was a greater Genius in the World than *Virgil*; He was one who seems to have been born for this glorious End, that the *Roman* Muse might exert in him the utmost Force of her Poetry: And his admirable and divine Beauties are manifestly owing to the happy Confederacy of Art and Nature. It was Art that contriv'd that incomparable Design of the *Æneis*, and it was Nature that executed it. Could the greatest Genius that ever was infus'd into Earthly Mold by Heaven if it had been unguided and unassisted by Art have

have taught him to make that noble and wonderful Use of the *Pythagorean* Transmigration, which he makes in the Sixth Book of his Poem? Had *Virgil* been a circular Poet, and closely adher'd to History, how could the *Romans* have been transported with that inimitable Episode of *Dido*, which brought a-fresh into their Minds the *Carthaginian* War, and the dreadful *Hannibal*? When 'tis evident that that admirable Episode is so little owing to a faithful observance of History, and the exact order of Time, that 'tis deriv'd from a very bold but judicious Violation of these; it being undeniable that *Dido* liv'd almost 300 Years after *Aeneas*. Yet is it that charming Episode that makes the chief Beauties of a third Part of the Poem. For the Destruction of *Troy* it self, which is so divinely related, is still more admirable by the Effect it produces, which is the Passion of *Dido*.

I should now proceed to shew under what Disadvantages *Shakespear* lay for want of being conversant with the Ancients. But I have already writ a long Letter, and am desirous to know how you relish what has been already said before I go any farther: For I am unwilling to take more Pains before I am sure of giving you some Pleasure. I am,

S I R,

*Your most humble, faithful Servant.*



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*On the Genius and Writings of*  
SHAKESPEAR.

## LETTER II.

S I R,

Feb. 6. 1711.

UPON the Encouragement I have received from you, I shall proceed to shew under what Disadvantages *Shakespear* lay for want of being conversant with the Ancients. But because I have lately been in some Conversation, where they would not allow, but that he was acquainted with the Ancients, I shall endeavour to make it appear that he was not; and the shewing that in the Method in which I pretend to convince the Reader of it, will sufficiently prove, what Inconveniencies he lay under, and what Errors he committed for want of being conversant with them. But here we must distinguish between the several kinds of Acquaintance: A Man may be said to be acquainted with another who never was but twice in his Company; but that is at the best a superficial Acquaintance,  
from

from which neither very great Pleasure nor Profit can be deriv'd. Our Business is here to shew, that *Shakespear* had no familiar Acquaintance with the *Græcian* and *Roman* Authors. For if he was familiarly conversant with them, how comes it to pass that he wants Art? Is it that he studied to know them in other things; and neglected that only in them, which chiefly tends to the Advancement of the Art of the Stage? Or is it that he wanted Discernment to see the Justness, and the Greatness, and the Harmony of their Designs, and the Reasonableness of those Rules upon which those Designs are founded? Or how come his Successors to have that Discernment which he wanted, when they fall so much below him in other things? How comes he to have been guilty of the grossest Faults in Chronology, and how come we to find out those Faults? In his Tragedy of *Troylus* and *Cressida*, he introduces *Hector* speaking of *Aristotle*, who was born a thousand Years after the Death of *Hector*. In the same Play mention is made of *Milo*, which is another very great Fault in Chronology. *Alexander* is mention'd in *Coriolanus*, tho' that Conqueror of the Orient liv'd above two hundred Years after him. In this last Tragedy he has mistaken the very Names of his Dramatick Persons, if we give Credit to *Livy*. For the Mother of *Coriolanus* in the *Roman* Historian

storian is *Vetturia*, and the Wife is *Volumnia*. Whereas in *Shakespear* the Wife is *Virgilia*, and the Mother *Volumnia*. And the *Volscian* General in *Shakespear* is *Tullus Aufidius*, and *Tullus Attius* in *Livy*. How comes it that he takes *Plutarch's* Word, who was by Birth a *Græcian*, for the Affairs of *Rome*, rather than that of the *Roman* Historian, if so be that he had read the latter? Or what Reason can be given for his not reading him, when he wrote upon a *Roman* Story, but that in *Shakespear's* time there was a Translation of *Plutarch*, and there was none of *Livy*? If *Shakespear* was familiarly conversant with the *Roman* Authors, how came he to introduce a Rabble into *Coriolanus*, in which he offended not only against the Dignity of Tragedy, but the Truth of Fact, the Authority of all the *Roman* Writers, the Customs of Ancient *Rome*, and the Majesty of the *Roman* People? By introducing a Rabble into *Julius Cæsar*, he only offended against the Dignity of Tragedy. For that part of the People who ran about the Streets upon great Festivals, or publick Calamities, or publick Rejoicings, or Revolutions in Government, are certainly the Scum of the Populace. But the Persons who in the Time of *Coriolanus*, rose in Vindication of their just Rights, and extorted from the Patricians the Institution of the Tribunes of the People



ple, and the Persons by whom afterwards *Coriolanus* was tried, were the whole Body of the *Roman* People to the Reserve of the Patricians, which Body included the *Roman* Knights, and the wealthy substantial Citizens, who were as different from the Rabble as the Patricians themselves, as qualify'd as the latter to form a right Judgment of Things, and to condemn the vain Opinions of the Rabble. So at least *Horace* esteems them, who very well knew his Countrymen.

*Offenduntur enim, quibus est equus, aut pater,  
aut res,*

*Nec siquid fricti ciceris probat aut nucis  
emptor,*

*Equis accipiant animis donantve Corona?*

Where we see the Knights and the substantial Citizens are rank'd in an equal Degree of Capacity with the *Roman* Senators, and are equally distinguish'd from the Rabble.

If *Shakespear* was so conversant with the Ancients, how comes he to have introduc'd some Characters into his Plays, so unlike what they are to be found in History? In the Character of *Menenius* in the following Tragedy, he has doubly offended against that Historical Resemblance. For first where *Menenius* was an eloquent Person, *Shakespear* has made him a downright Buffoon.

And how is it possible for any Man to conceive a *Ciceronian Jack-pudding*? Never was any Buffoon eloquent, or wise, or witty, or virtuous. All the good and ill Qualities of a Buffoon are summ'd up in one Word, and that is a Buffoon. And secondly, whereas *Shakespear* has made him a Hater and Contemner and Villifier of the People, we are assur'd by the *Roman* Historian that *Menenius* was extremely popular. He was so very far from opposing the Institution of the Tribunes, as he is represented in *Shakespear*, that he was chiefly instrumental in it. After the People had deserted the City, and sat down upon the sacred Mountain, he was the chief of the Delegates whom the Senate deputed to them, as being look'd upon to be the Person who would be most agreeable to them. In short, this very *Menenius* both liv'd and dy'd so very much their Favourite, that dying poor he had pompous Funerals at the Expende of the *Roman* People.

Had *Shakespear* read either *Sallust* or *Cicero*, how could he have made so very little of the first and greatest of Men, as that *Cæsar* should be but a Fourth-rate Actor in his own Tragedy? How could it have been that seeing *Cæsar*, we should ask for *Cæsar*? That we should ask, where is his unequal'd Greatness of Mind, his unbounded Thirst of Glory, and that victorious Eloquence with

with which he triumph'd over the Souls of both Friends and Enemies, and with which he rivall'd *Cicero* in Genius as he did *Pompey* in Power? How fair an Occasion was there to open the Character of *Cæsar* in the first Scene between *Brutus* and *Cassius*? For when *Cassius* tells *Brutus* that *Cæsar* was but a Man like them, and had the same natural Imperfections which they had, how natural had it been for *Brutus* to reply, that *Cæsar* indeed had their Imperfections of Nature, but neither he nor *Cassius* had by any means the great Qualities of *Cæsar*: neither his Military Virtue, nor Science, nor his matchless Renown, nor his unparallell'd Victories, his unwearied Bounty to his Friends, nor his Godlike Clemency to his Foes, his Beneficence, his Munificence, his easiness of Access to the meanest *Roman*, his indefatigable Labours, his incredible Celerity, the Plausibleness if not Justness of his Ambition, that knowing himself to be the greatest of Men, he only sought occasion to make the World confess him such. In short, if *Brutus*, after enumerating all the wonderful Qualities of *Cæsar*, had resolv'd in spite of them all to sacrifice him to publick Liberty, how had such a Proceeding heighten'd the Virtue and the Character of *Brutus*? But then indeed it would have been requisite that *Cæsar*



*far* upon his Appearance should have made all this good. And as we know no Principle of human Action but human Sentiment only, *Cæsar* who did greater Things, and had greater Designs than the rest of the *Romans*, ought certainly to have outshin'd by many Degrees all the other Characters of his Tragedy. *Cæsar* ought particularly to have justified his Actions, and to have heighten'd his Character, by shewing that what he had done, he had done by Necessity; that the *Romans* had lost their *Agrarian*, lost their Rotation of Magistracy, and that consequently nothing but an empty Shadow of publick Liberty remain'd. That the *Gracchi* had made the last noble but unsuccessful Efforts, for the restoring the Commonwealth, that they had fail'd for want of arbitrary irresistible Power, the Restoration of the *Agrarian* requiring too vast a Retrospect to be done without it; that the Government, when *Cæsar* came to publick Affairs, was got into the Hands of a few, and that those few were factious, and were contending among themselves, and if you will pardon so mean an Expression, scrambling as it were for Power: That *Cæsar* was reduc'd to the Necessity of ruling, or himself obeying a Master; and that apprehending that another would exercise the supreme Command, without that Clemency and Moderation which he did, he had rather cho-

en to rule than to obey. So that *Cæsar* was faulty not so much in seizing upon the Sovereignty, which was become in a manner necessary, as in not re-establishing the Commonwealth, by restoring the *Agrarian* and the Rotation of Magistracies, after he had got absolute and uncontrollable Power. And if *Cæsar* had seiz'd upon the Sovereignty only with a View of re-establishing Liberty, he had surpass'd all Mortals in Godlike Goodness as much as he did in the rest of his astonishing Qualities. I must confess, I do not remember that we have any Authority from the *Roman* Historians which may induce us to believe, that *Cæsar* had any such Design. Nor if he had had any such View, could he, who was the most secret, the most prudent, and the most discerning of Men, have discover'd it, before his *Parthian* Expedition was over, for fear of utterly disobliging his Veterans. And *Cæsar* believ'd that Expedition necessary for the Honour and Interest of the State, and for his own Glory.

But of this we may be sure, that two of the most discerning of all the *Romans*, and who had the deepest Insight into the Soul of *Cæsar*, *Sallust* and *Cicero*, were not without Hopes that *Cæsar* would really re-establish Liberty, or else they would not have attack'd him upon it; the one in his Ora-

tion for *Marcus Marcellus*, the other in the Second Part of that little Treatise *De Republicâ ordinandâ*, which is address'd to *Cæsar*. *Hæc igitur tibi reliqua pars*, says *Cicero*, *Hic restat Actus, in hoc elaborandum est, ut Rempublicam constituas, eâque tu in primis compositâ, summa Tranquillitate & otio perfruire.* *Cicero* therefore was not without Hope that *Cæsar* would re-establish the Commonwealth; and any one who attentively peruses that Oration of *Cicero*, will find that that Hope was reasonably grounded, upon his knowledge of the great Qualities of *Cæsar*, his Clemency, his Beneficence, his admirable Discernment; and that avoidless Ruine in which the whole Empire would be soon involv'd, if *Cæsar* did not effect this. *Sallust* urges it still more home to him and with greater vehemence; he has recourse to every Motive that may be thought to be powerful over so great a Soul. He exhorts him by the Memory of his matchless Conquests, not to suffer the invincible Empire of the *Roman* People to be devour'd by Time, or to be torn in pieces by Discord; one of which would soon and infallibly happen, if Liberty was not restor'd.

He introduces his Country and his Progenitors urging him in a noble Prosopopeia by all the mighty Benefits which they had conferr'd upon him, with so little Pains of



his own, not to deny them that just and easy Request of the Restoration of Liberty. He adjures him by those Furies which will eternally haunt his Soul upon his impious Refusal: He implores him by the foresight of those dismal Calamities, that horrible Slaughter, those endless Wars, and that unbounded Devastation, which will certainly fall upon Mankind, if the Restoration of Liberty is prevented by his Death, or his incurable Sickness: And lastly, he entreats him by his Thirst of immortal Glory, that Glory in which he now has Rivals, if he has not Equals; but which, if he re-establishes Liberty, will be acknowledg'd by consenting Nations to have neither Equal nor Second.

I am apt to believe that if *Shakespear* had been acquainted with all this, we had had from him quite another Character of *Cæsar* than that which we now find in him. He might then have given us a Scene something like that which *Corneille* has so happily us'd in his *Cinna*; something like that which really happen'd between *Augustus*, *Mecenas* and *Agrippa*. He might then have introduc'd *Cæsar*, consulting *Cicero* on the one side, and on the other *Anthony*, whether he should retain that absolute Sovereignty, which he had acquir'd by his Victory, or whether he should re-establish and immortalize Liberty. That would have been a

Scene, which might have employ'd the finest Art and the utmost force of a Writer. That had been a Scene in which all the great Qualities of *Cæsar* might have been display'd. I will not pretend to determine here how that Scene might have been turn'd; and what I have already said on this Subject, has been spoke with the utmost Caution and Diffidence. But this I will venture to say, that if that Scene had been manag'd so, as, by the powerful Motives employ'd in it, to have shaken the Soul of *Cæsar*, and to have left room for the least Hope, for the least Doubt, that *Cæsar* would have re-establish'd Liberty, after his *Parthian* Expedition; and if this Conversation had been kept secret till the Death of *Cæsar*, and then had been discover'd by *Anthony*, then had *Cæsar* fall'n, so belov'd and lamented by the *Roman* People, so pitied and so bewail'd even by the Conspirators themselves, as never Man fell. Then there would have been a Catastrophe the most dreadful and the most deplorable that ever was beheld upon the Tragick Stage. Then had we seen the noblest of the Conspirators cursing their temerarious Act, and the most apprehensive of them, in dreadful expectation of those horrible Calamities, which fell upon the *Romans* after the Death of *Cæsar*. But, Sir, when I write this to you, I write with the utmost Deference to the extraordinary

nary Judgment of that great Man, who some Years ago, I hear, alter'd the *Julius Caesar*. And I make no doubt but that his fine Discernment, and the rest of his great Qualities have amply supply'd the Defects which are found in the Character of *Shakespeare's Caesar*.

I should here answer an Argument, by which some People pretend to prove, and especially those with whom I lately convers'd, that *Shakespeare* was conversant with the Ancients. But besides that the Post is about to be gone, I am heartily tir'd with what I have already writ, and so doubtless are you; I shall therefore defer the rest to the next opportunity, and remain

Your, &c.



On



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*On the Writings and Genius of*  
SHAKESPEAR.

## LETTER III.

S I R,

Feb. 8.

**I** Come now to the main Argument, which some People urge to prove that *Shakespeare* was conversant with the Ancients. For there is, say they, among *Shakespeare's* Plays, one call'd *The Comedy of Errors*, which is undeniably an Imitation of the *Menecmi* of *Plautus*. Now *Shakespeare*, say they, being conversant with *Plautus*, it undeniably follows that he was acquainted with the Ancients; because no *Roman* Author could be hard to him who had conquer'd *Plautus*. To which I answer, that the Errors which we have mention'd above are to be accounted for no other way, but by the want of knowing the Ancients, or by downright want of Capacity. But nothing can be more absurd or more unjust than to impute it to want of Capacity. For the very Sentiments of *Shakespeare* alone

lone are sufficient to shew, that he had a great Understanding: And therefore we must account some other way for his Imitation of the *Menechmi*. I remember to have seen among the Translations of *Ovid's* Epistles printed by Mr. *Tonson*, an Imitation of that from *OEnone* to *Paris*, which Mr. *Dryden* tells us in his Preface to those Epistles was imitated by one of the Fair Sex who understood no *Latin*, but that she had done enough to make those blush who understood it the best. There are at this day several Translators, who, as *Hudibras* has it,

*Translate from Languages of which  
They understand no part of Speech.*

I will not affirm that of *Shakespear*; I believe he was able to do what Pedants call construe, but that he was able to read *Plautus* without Pain and Difficulty I can never believe. Now I appeal to you, Sir, what time he had between his Writing and his Acting, to read any thing that could not be read with Ease and Pleasure. We see that our Adversaries themselves acknowledge, that if *Shakespear* was able to read *Plautus* with Ease, nothing in Latinity could be hard to him. How comes it to pass then, that he has given us no Proofs of his familiar Acquaintance with the Ancients,

ents, but this Imitation of the *Menechmi*, and a Version of two Epistles of *Ovid*? How comes it that he had never read *Horace* of a superiour Merit to either, and particularly his Epistle to the *Piso's*, which so much concern'd his Art? Or if he had read that Epistle, how comes it that in his *Troilus* and *Cressida* [we must observe by the way, that when *Shakespear* wrote that Play, *Ben Johnson* had not as yet translated that Epistle] he runs counter to the Instructions which *Horace* has given for the forming the Character of *Achilles*?

*Scriptor: Honoratum si forte reponis Achillem,*

*Impiger, Iracundus, Inexorabilis, Acer, Fura neget sibi nata.*

Where is the *Impiger*, the *Iracundus*, or the *Acer*, in the Character of *Shakespear's Achilles*? who is nothing but a drolling, lazy, conceited, overlooking Coxcomb; so far from being the honour'd *Achilles*, the Epithet that *Homer*, and *Horace* after him give him, that he is deservedly the Scorn and the Jest of the rest of the Characters, even to that Buffoon *Thersites*.

Tho' *Shakespear* succeeded very well in Comedy, yet his principal Talent and his chief Delight was Tragedy. If then *Shakespear* was qualify'd to read *Plautus* with Ease,



Ease, he could read with a great deal more Ease the Translations of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*. And tho' by these Translations he would not have been able to have seen the charming colouring of those great Masters, yet would he have seen all the Harmony and the Beauty of their great and their just Designs. He would have seen enough to have stirr'd up a noble Emulation in so exalted a Soul as his. How comes it then that we hear nothing from him, of the *OEdipus*, the *Electra*, the *Antigone* of *Sophocles*, of the *Iphigenia's*, the *Orestes*, the *Medea*, the *Hecuba* of *Euripides*? How comes it that we see nothing in the Conduct of his Pieces, that shews us that he had the least Acquaintance with any of these great Master-pieces? Did *Shakespear* appear to be so nearly touch'd with the Affliction of *Hecuba* for the Death of *Priam*, which was but daub'd and bungled by one of his Countrymen, that he could not forbear introducing it as it were by Violence into his own *Hamlet*, and would he make no Imitation, no Commendation, not the least Mention of the unparallell'd and inimitable Grief of the *Hecuba* of *Euripides*? How comes it, that we find no Imitation of any ancient Play in Him but the *Menechmi* of *Plautus*? How came he to chuse a Comick preferably to the Tragick Poets? Or how comes he to chuse *Plutus* prefera-

preferably to *Terence*, who is so much more just, more graceful, more regular, and more natural? Or how comes he to chuse the *Menechmi* of *Plautus*, which is by no means his Master-piece, before all his other Comedies? I vehemently suspect that this Imitation of the *Menechmi*, was either from a printed Translation of that Comedy which is lost, or some Version in Manuscript brought him by a Friend, or sent him perhaps by a Stranger, or from the original Play it self recommended to him, and read to him by some learned Friend. In short, I had rather account for this, by what is not absurd than by what is, or by a less Absurdity than by a greater. For nothing can be more wrong than to conclude from this that *Shakespear* was conversant with the Ancients; which contradicts the Testimony of his Contemporary, and his familiar Acquaintance *Ben Johnson*, and of his Successor *Milton*;

*Lo Shakespear, Fancy's sweetest Child,  
Warbles his native Wood-notes wild.*

and of Mr. *Dryden* after them both; and which destroys the most glorious Part of *Shakespear's* Merit immediately. For how can he be esteem'd equal by Nature, or superior to the Ancients, when he falls so far short of them in Art, tho' he had the Advantage

vantage of knowing all that they did before him? Nay it debases him below those of common Capacity, by reason of the Errors which we mention'd above. Therefore he who allows that *Shakespear* had Learning and a familiar Acquaintance with the Ancients, ought to be look'd upon as a Detractor from his extraordinary Merit, and from the Glory of *Great Britain*. For whether is it more honourable for this Island to have produc'd a Man, who without having any Acquaintance with the Ancients, or any but a slender and a superficial one, appears to be their Equal or their Superiour by the Force of Genius and Nature, or to have bred one who knowing the Ancients, falls infinitely short of them in Art, and consequently in Nature it self? *Great Britain* has but little Reason to boast of its Natives Education, since the same that they had here, they might have had in another place. But it may justly claim a very great share in their Nature and Genius; since these depend in a great measure on the Climate; and therefore *Horace* in the Instruction which he gives for the forming the Characters, advises the noble *Romans* for whose Instruction he chiefly writes to consider whether the Dramatick Person whom they introduce is

*Colchus*



*Colchus an Affyrius, Thebis nutritus an Argis.*

Thus, Sir, I have endeavour'd to shew under what great Disadvantages *Shakespear* lay, for want of the Poetical Art, and for want of being conversant with the Ancients.

But besides this, he lay under other very great Inconveniencies. For he was neither Master of Time enough to consider, correct, and polish what he wrote, to alter it, to add to it, and to retrench from it, nor had he Friends to consult upon whose Capacity and Integrity he could depend. And tho' a Person of very good Judgment, may succeed very well without consulting his Friends, if he takes time enough to correct what he writes; yet even the greatest Man that Nature and Art can conspire to accomplish, can never attain to Perfection, without either employing a great deal of time, or taking the Advice of judicious Friends. Nay, 'tis the Opinion of *Horace*, that he ought to do both.

*Siquid tamen olim  
Scripseris, in Metii descendat Judicis aures,  
Et Patris, & nostras; nonumque prematur  
in Annum.*

Now we know very well that *Shakespear* was

was an Actor, at a time when there were seven or eight Companies of Players in the Town together, who each of them did their utmost Endeavours to get the Audiences from the rest, and consequently that our Author was perpetually call'd upon, by those who had the Direction and Management of the Company to which he belong'd, for new Pieces which might be able to support them, and give them some Advantage over the rest. And 'tis easie to judge what Time he was Master of, between his laborious Employment of Acting, and his continual Hurry of Writing. As for Friends, they whom in all likelihood *Shakespeare* consulted most, were two or three of his Fellow-Actors, because they had the Care of publishing his Works committed to them. Now they, as we are told by *Ben Johnson* in his *Discoveries*, were extremely pleas'd with their Friend for scarce ever making a Blot; and were very angry with *Ben*, for saying he wish'd that he had made a thousand. The Misfortune of it is, that *Horace* was perfectly of *Ben's* mind.

———*Vos O,*

*Pompilius sanguis, carmen reprehendite,*  
*quod non*

*Multa dies, & multa litura coercuit, atque*  
*Præfectum decies non castigavit ad unguem.*

And so was my Lord *Roscommon*.

D d

Poets

*Poet lose half the Praise they should have  
got,  
Could it be known what they discreetly blot.*

These Friends then of *Shakespear* were not qualify'd to advise him. As for *Ben Johnson*, besides that *Shakespear* began to know him late, and that *Ben* was not the most communicative Person in the World of the Secrets of his Art; he seems to me to have had no right Notion of Tragedy. Nay, so far from it, that he who was indeed a very great Man, and who has writ Comedies, by which he has born away the Prize of Comedy both from Ancients and Moderns, and been an Honour to *Great Britain*; and who has done this without any Rules to guide him, except what his own incomparable Talent dictated to him; This extraordinary Man has err'd so grossly in Tragedy, of which there were not only stated Rules, but Rules which he himself had often read, and had even translated, that he has chosen two Subjects, which, according to those very Rules, were utterly incapable of exciting either Compassion or Terror for the principal Characters, which yet are the chief Passions that a Tragick Poet ought to endeavour to excite. So that *Shakespear* having neither had Time to correct, nor

Friends



Friends to consult, must necessarily have frequently left such faults in his Writings, for the Correction of which either a great deal of Time or a judicious and a well-natur'd Friend is indispensably necessary.

*Vir bonus & prudens versus reprehendet inertes,*

*Culpabit duros, incomptis allinet Atrum  
Transverso calamo signum, ambitiosa recidet,  
Ornamenta, parum claris lucem dare coget,  
Arguet ambigue dictum, metanda notabit.*

There is more than one Example of every kind of these Faults in the Tragedies of *Shakespear*, and even in the *Coriolanus*. There are Lines that are utterly void of that celestial Fire, of which *Shakespear* is sometimes Master in so great a Degree. And consequently there are Lines that are stiff and forc'd, and harsh and unmusical, tho' *Shakespear* had naturally an admirable Ear for the Numbers. But no Man ever was very musical who did not write with Fire, and no Man can always write with Fire, unless he is so far Master of his Time, as to expect those Hours when his Spirits are warm and volatile. *Shakespear* must therefore sometimes have Lines which are neither strong nor graceful: For who ever had Force or Grace that had not Spirit? There are in his *Coriolanus*, among a

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great

great many natural and admirable Beauties, three or four of those Ornaments which *Horace* would term ambitious; and which we in *English* are apt to call *Fustian* or *Bombast*. There are Lines in some Places which are very obscure, and whole Scenes which ought to be alter'd.

I have, Sir, employ'd some Time and Pains, and that little Judgment which I have acquir'd in these Matters by a long and a faithful reading both of Ancients and Moderns, in adding, retrenching and altering several Things in the *Coriolanus* of *Shakespeare*, but with what Success I must leave to be determin'd by you. I know very well that you will be surpriz'd to find, that after all that I have said in the former Part of this Letter, against *Shakespeare's* introducing the Rabble into *Coriolanus*, I have not only retain'd in the second Act of the following Tragedy the Rabble which is in the Original, but deviated more from the *Roman* Customs than *Shakespeare* had done before me. I desire you to look upon it as a voluntary Fault and a Trespas against Conviction: 'Tis one of those Things which are *ad Populum Phalerae*, and by no means insert'd to please such Men as you.

Thus, Sir, have I laid before you a short but impartial Account of the Beauties and Defects of *Shakespeare*, with an Intention to make these Letters publick if they are approv'd

prov'd by you; to teach some People to distinguish between his Beauties and his Defects, that while they imitate the one, they may with Caution avoid the other [there being nothing of more dangerous Contagion to Writers, and especially to young ones, than the Faults of great Masters] and while with *Milton* they applaud the great Qualities which *Shakespear* had by Nature, they may follow his wise Example, and form themselves as he assures us that he himself did, upon the Rules and Writings of the Ancients.

Sir, if so candid and able a Judge as your self shall happen to approve of this Essay in the main, and to excuse and correct my Errors, that Indulgence and that Correction will not only encourage me to make these Letters publick, but will enable me to bear the Reproach of those, who would fix a Brand, even upon the justest Criticism, as the Effect of Envy and Ill-nature; as if there could possibly be any Ill-nature in the doing Justice, or in the endeavouring to advance a very noble and a very useful Art, and consequently to prove beneficent to Mankind. As for those who may accuse me of the want of a due Veneration for the Merit of an Author of so establish'd a Reputation as *Shakespear*, I shall beg leave to tell them, that they chuse the wrongest time that they could possibly take for such



an Accusation as that. For I appeal to you, Sir, who shews most Veneration for the Memory of *Shakespear*, he who loves and admires his Charms and makes them one of his chief Delights, who sees him and reads him over and over and still remains unsatiated, and who mentions his Faults for no other Reason but to make his Excellency the more conspicuous, or he who pretending to be his blind Admirer, shews in Effect the utmost Contempt for him, preferring empty effeminate Sound to his solid Beauties and manly Graces, and deserting him every Night for an execrable *Italian* Ballad, so vile that a Boy who should write such lamentable Dogrel, would be turn'd out of *Westminster-School* for a desperate Blockhead, too stupid to be corrected and amended by the harshest Discipline of the Place.

I am,

S I R,

Yours, &c.

To

*To the SPECTATOR, upon his  
Paper on the 16th of April.*

YOU know, Mr. *Spectator*, that Esquire *Bickerstaff* attack'd the Sharpers with Success; but *Shadwell* is of Opinion that your Bully with his Box and his false Dice is an honefter Fellow than the Rhetorical Author, who makes use of his Tropes and Figures, which are his High and his Low-runners, to cheat us at once of our Money and of our Intellectuals.

I would not have you think, Mr. *Spectator*, that this Reflection is directed to you: 'Tis only intended against one or two of your Correspondents, and particularly the *Inns-of-Court*-man, who, as you told us in your Second Paper, supplies you with most of your Criticism: who seems to me so little to understand the Province that he has undertaken, that you would do well to advise him to do by you as he has done by his Father, and make a Bargain in the gross with some honest Fellow to answer all your Occasions. Which wholesome Advice if he proves too obstinate or too proud to take; I am confident

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dent at least that he is too gallant a Person to take it ill if once a Week or once a Fort-night I should shew so much Presumption as to cause a Writ of Error to be issued out to reverse his *Temple-Judgment*.

I cannot wonder that Criticism should degenerate so vilely at a time when Poetry and Acting are sunk so low. For as *Hobbes* has observ'd, that as often as Reason is against a Man, a Man will be against Reason; so as often as the Rules are against an Author, an Author will be against the Rules. Men first write foolish ridiculous Tragedies, which shock all the Rules of Reason and Philosophy, and then they make foolish extravagant Rules to fit those foolish Plays. 'Tis impossible that your Gentleman of the Inns-of-Court could have sent you so much wrong Sense as there is in your Paper of the 16th, if he had not formerly writ an absurd Tragedy. There are as many Bulls and Blunders, and Contradictions in it almost as there are Lines, and all deliver'd with that insolent and that blust'ring Air, which usually attends upon Error, and Delusion, while Truth, like the Deity that inspires it, comes calmly and without noise.

To set a few of his Errors in their proper Light, he tells us in the beginning of that Paper, *That the English Writers of Tragedy are possess'd with a Notion, that when they represent a virtuous or innocent*  
*Person*



*Person in Distress, they ought not to leave him till they have deliver'd him out of his Trouble, and made him triumph over his Enemies.*

But, Mr. *Spectator*, is this peculiar to the English Writers of Tragedy? Have not the French Writers of Tragedy the same Notion? Does not Racine tell us, in the Preface to his *Iphigenia*, that it would have been horrible to have defil'd the Stage with the Murder of a Princess so virtuous and so lovely as was *Iphigenia*.

But your Correspondent goes on, *This Error*, says he, with an insolent and dogmatick Air, *they have been led into by a ridiculous Doctrine in modern Criticism, that they are oblig'd to an equal Distribution of Rewards and Punishments, and an impartial Execution of poetical Justice.*

But who were the first who establish'd this Rule he is not able to tell. I take it for granted, that a Man who is ingenuous enough to own his Ignorance, is willing to be instructed. Let me tell him then, that the first who establish'd this ridiculous Doctrine of modern Criticism, was a certain modern Critick, who liv'd above two thousand Years ago; and who tells us expressly in the thirteenth Chapter of his critical *Spectator*, which Pedants call his Poetick, *That since a Tragedy, to have all the Beauty of which it is capable, ought to be Implex and not Simple*, (by the way, Mr. *Spectator*, you must

must bear with this critical Cant, as we do with your Speculations and Lucubrations) and ought to move Compassion and Terror, for we have already shewn that the exciting these Passions is the proper Effect of a tragical Imitation, it follows necessarily, that we must not choose a very good Man, to plunge him from a prosperous Condition into Adversity, for instead of moving Compassion and Terrour, that on the contrary would create Horrour, and be detested by all the World.

And does not the same deluded Philosopher tell us in the very same Chapter, that the Fable to which he gives the second Preference, is that which has a double Constitution, and which ends by a double Catastrophe; a Catastrophe favourable to the Good and fatal to the Wicked. Is not here, Mr. *Spectator*, a very formal Recommendation of the impartial and exact Execution of poetical Justice? Thus *Aristotle* was the first who establish'd this ridiculous Doctrine of modern Criticism, but Mr. *Rymer* was the first who introduc'd it into our native Language; who notwithstanding the Rage of all the Poetafers of the Times, whom he has exasperated by opening the Eyes of the Blind that they may see their Errors, will always pass with impartial Posterity for a most learned, a most judicious, and a most useful Critick. Now is not your Correspondent a profound and a learned Person? and ought

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he not to own himself oblig'd to me for this notable piece of Erudition?

But he goes on in his dictatorial way: *This Rule*, says he, *whoever establish'd it, has, I am sure, no Foundation in Nature, in Reason, and in the practice of the Ancients.* But what will this dogmatick Person say now, when we shew him that this contemptible Doctrine of poetical Justice is not only founded in Reason and Nature, but is it self the Foundation of all the Rules, and ev'n of Tragedy itself? For what Tragedy can there be without a Fable? or what Fable without a Moral? or what Moral without poetical Justice? What Moral, where the Good and the Bad are confounded by Destiny, and perish alike promiscuously. Thus we see this Doctrine of poetical Justice is more founded in Reason and Nature than all the rest of the poetical Rules together. For what can be more natural, and more highly reasonable, than to employ that Rule in Tragedy, without which that Poem cannot exist? Well! but the Practice of the Ancients is against this poetical Justice! What always, Mr. *Spectator*! will your Correspondent have the Assurance to affirm that? No, but sometimes: Why then sometimes the Ancients offended against Reason and Nature. And who ever believ'd that the Ancients were without Fault, or brought Tragedy to its Perfection? But I shall take another Opportunity to shew that



that the Practice of the Ancients, in all their Master-pieces, is exactly according to this fundamental Rule. I have no time to do that in this short Letter because that would necessarily oblige me to shew that poetical Justice is of a much larger Extent than this profound Critick imagines; but yet shall give the discerning Reader a hint of it in that which follows.

*Poetical Justice*, says your Correspondent, *has no Foundation in Nature and Reason, because we find that good and evil happen alike to all Men on this side the Grave.* In answer to which he must give me leave to tell him, that this is not only a very false but a dangerous Assertion that we neither know what Men really are nor what they really suffer.

'Tis not always that we know Men's Crimes, but how seldom do we know their Passions, and especially their darling Passions? And as Passion is the Occasion of infinitely more Disorder in the World than Malice, [for where one Man falls a Sacrifice to inveterate Malice, thousand become Victims to Revenge and Ambition; and whereas Malice has something that shocks human Nature, Passion is pleasingly catching and contagious.] Can any thing be more just, than that that Providence which governs the World should punish Men

for indulging their Passions, as much as for obeying the Dictates of their most envenom'd Hatred and Malice?

Thus you see, for ought we know, Good and Evil does not happen alike to all Men on this side the Grave. Because 'tis for the most part, by their Passions, that Men offend; and 'tis by their Passions, for the most part, that they are punish'd. But this is certain, that the more Virtue a Man has the more he commands his Passions; but the Virtuous alone command them. The Wicked take the utmost Care to dissemble and conceal them; for which reason we neither know what our Neighbours are, nor what they really suffer. Man is too finite, too shallow, and too empty a Creature to know another Man thoroughly, to know the Creature of an infinite Creator; but dramatical Persons are Creatures of which a Poet is himself the Creator. And tho' a Mortal is not able to know the Almighty's Creatures, he may be allow'd to know his own; to know the utmost Extent of their Guilt, and what they ought to suffer; nay, he must be allow'd not only to know this himself, but to make it manifest and unquestionable to all his Readers and Hearers. The Creatures of a poetical Creator have no Diffimulation and no Reserve. We see their Passions in all their Height, and in all their Deformity;

formity; and when they are unfortunate, we are never to seek for the Cause.

But suppose I should grant that there is not always an equal Distribution of Affliction and Happiness here below. Man is a Creature who was created immortal, and a Creature consequently that will find a Compensation in Futurity for any seeming Inequality in his Destiny here. But the Creatures of a poetical Creator are imaginary and transitory; they have no longer Duration than the Representation of their respective Fables; and consequently, if they offend, they must be punish'd during that Representation. And therefore we are very far from pretending that poetical Justice is an equal Representation of the Justice of the Almighty.

We freely confess that 'tis but a very narrow and a very imperfect Type of it; so very narrow, and so very imperfect, that 'tis forc'd by temporal to represent eternal Punishments; and therefore when we shew a Man unfortunate in Tragedy, for not restraining his Passions, we mean that every one will for such Neglect, unless he timely repents, be infallibly punish'd by infinite Justice either here or hereafter.

If upon this Foot we examine the Tragedies of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*, we shall find that in their most beautiful Pieces, they are impartial Executors of Poetick Justice. And



It is upon this Foot that *Aristotle* requires that we should examine them. Your Correspondent I must confess is in the right when he says that that Philosopher declares for Tragedies, whose Catastrophes are unhappy with relation to the principal Characters. But then what Instructions does he give us for the forming those principal Characters? We are neither to make them very virtuous Persons on the one side, that is Persons who absolutely command their Passions, nor on the other side Villains who are actuated by inveterate Malice, but something between these two, that is to say Persons who neglecting their Passions suffer them to grow outrageous, and to hurry them to Actions which they otherwise would abhor. And that Philosopher expressly declares, as we have shewn above, that to make a virtuous Man unhappy, that is a Man who absolutely commands his Passions, would create Horror instead of Compassion, and would be detested by all the World. And thus we have shewn that *Aristotle* is for Poetical Justice, notwithstanding that he is for unhappy Catastrophes. And so one would think was your Correspondent. For when he enumerates and commends some *English* Tragedies, which have unfortunate Catastrophes; there are not two of those which he commends, whose principal Characters can be said to be innocent, and consequently

frequently there are not two of them where there is not a due Observance of poetical Justice.

Thus, Mr. *Spectator*, I have discussed the Business of poetical Justice, and shewn it to be the Foundation of all Tragedy; and therefore whatever Persons, whether ancient or modern, have writ Dialogues which they call Tragedies, where this Justice is not observ'd, those Persons have entertain'd and amus'd the World with romantick lamentable Tales, instead of just Tragedies, and of lawful Fables.

'Tis not my Business at present to take any farther Notice of the Errors of your Correspondent; perhaps I no more approve of Tragi-Comedies, or Tragedies with double Plots, than he does; But I hope he will not take it ill if I put him in mind that several of the Plays which he recommended before are Tragi-Comedies, and that most of them have double Plots. But he is vilely mistaken if he thinks that Tragi-Comedy is of the Growth of our *English* Theatres.

I shall take another Opportunity to shew him that he is as much mistaken in what he has said of Humours, as in what he dictates concerning poetical Justice.

I am

Your very humble, &c.

To

*To the SPECTATOR upon his  
Paper on the 24th of April.*

*S I R,*

I Have read over your Paper of the 24th with a great deal of Satisfaction, and here return you my Acknowledgments for the Honour you have done me in quoting two of my Verses with Applause. I think myself oblig'd in Gratitude, my worthy Friend, to do as much Honour to your Judgment as you have done to my Imagination; and as you have the Goodness to allow me to be an humorous Poet, I am bound in Justice to celebrate you for a wonderful Critick; and to make it appear that, contrary to the Observation of the Author of a late Rhapsody, one who has shewn himself no great Poet may be a prodigious Judge. Indeed the Observation of that Author is so far from being true, that most of the Criticks Ancient and Modern have been no Poets, and most of the Poets Ancient and Modern have been no Criticks. I cannot find out that any but *Homer*, and *Virgil*, and *Horace*, and *Sophocles*, and *Euripides* among the

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Ancients



Ancients were great Criticks. For who can believe, that has read them, that *Apollonius Rhodius*, *Nonnus*, *Lucan*, *Statius*, and *Silius Italicus* ever so much as heard that Nature, and the Philosophers her Interpreters and Commentators, had laid down Rules for an Epick Poem? And who that has read the Moderns could imagine, that most of their Dramatick Poets had ever so much as heard that there were such things as the Rules? As *Boileau* has observ'd of the *French*, that some Persons among them had distinguish'd themselves by their Rhymes, who never knew how to distinguish *Lucan* from *Virgil*; so some among our own Rhimers have been renown'd for versifying, who never so much as knew that *Horace* and *Milton* were good Poets. And I can on the other side name several who never distinguished themselves by Poetry, who yet have oblig'd the World with Criticisms which have been Non-pareillo's, and the very Top-Critick of all those Criticks is my worthy Friend the *Spectator*.

Tho' who the Devil could have ever expected to have found my worthy Friend a Critick, after he had treated Criticks with so much Contempt in two or three of his Immortal *Tatlers*, and particularly in the 29<sup>th</sup> and the 246<sup>th</sup>, where they are pronounc'd to be the silliest of Mortals, Creatures, forsooth, who profess Judgment:

Judgment; tho' by the way, Mr. *Spectator*, he who professes or practises Poetry, and does not profess Judgment in it, professes himself an Ass. It was from those *Tatlers*, and one or two more, Mr. *Spectator*, that I guess'd that you had a mortal Aversion to Criticism; but now I find plainly that they were none of your own, but were sent you by two or three damn'd Poets, who are a sort of Offenders that have not half the Charity which other Malefactors are wont to shew, but bear eternal Malice to their Executioners.

Thus the *Invectives* against Criticks and Criticism were other Peoples; you were too wise to write any such thing, as knowing that *Tast* which declines so fast is only to be restor'd and maintain'd by Criticism. And therefore instead of writing *Invectives* against it, you have oblig'd the World with the thing it self, with Criticism upon Criticism, and such Criticism. — As those *Tatlers* were the Off-spring of some certain Poets, which is manifest by their insipid Satyr, like the faint Eagerness of Vinegar decay'd: nothing is more clear than that the Criticisms could be none but yours. For as you may discover *ex ungue Leonem*, & *ex pede Herculem*, so in this Case the prodigious Off-spring speaks and confesses the Gigantick Father.

In your very Folio of the 24<sup>th</sup> of April, how have you shewn the Fineness of your

Discernment, and the Profundity of your Penetration, by your Encomium of two Verses of my Translation of the Fourth Satyr of *Boileau*? 'Tis now thirty Years since I translated that Satyr, and consequently was a very Boy at the Time of that Translation; yet from that Time to this the stupid Age has been ignorant of the Beauty of that Couplet. How very flegmatick a Wretch have I been, and how illegitimate an Offspring of Mr. *Bays*, not to know any thing of my own Excellence till I heard of it from you?

How little did I imagine when I translated that Couplet, that the great Critick was then in Embrio who thirty Years afterwards should declare it to be a charming Couplet, by giving it a place in his never-dying Speculations.

I am perfectly convinc'd, my most worthy and most ingenious Friend, that we Authors are as blind and as partial Judges of our own Works, as we are unrighteous ones of other Peoples. I was apt to imagine, before I submitted my own Opinion to the decisive Authority of your Judgment; that you would have done more for the Credit of my Genius and of your own Discernment by commending the following Verses of the Fourth Book of the Poem upon the Battle of *Ramelies*, when you had so fair an occasion of taking notice of them, as you had a



the writing the 56th *Tatler*. If I begin the Verses a little higher than the couching of the Cataracts which is the Subject of the 56th *Tatler*, I am confident you will have the Goodness to pardon me, and the rather because you discover'd more than a common Satisfaction when you were present with your Friend Mr. *A.* at the reading those Verses in Manuscript. A celestial Spirit visits the Duke of *Marlborough* in a Vision the Night before the Battel of *Ramelies*, and after he has said several other things to him, goes on thus.

*A wondrous Victory attends thy Arms,  
Great in it self, and in its Sequel vast;  
Whose ecchoing Sound thro' all the West  
shall run*

*Transporting the glad Nations all around,  
Who oft shall doubt, and oft suspend their  
Joy,*

*And oft imagine all an empty Dream;  
The Conqueror himself shall cry amaz'd,  
'Tis not our Work, alas we did it not,  
The Hand of God, the Hand of God is here!  
For thee, so great shall be thy high Renown,  
That Fame shall think no Musick like thy  
Name;*

*Around the circling Globe it shall be spread,  
And to the World's last Ages shall endure;  
And the most lofty, most aspiring Man,  
Shall want th' Assurance in his secret Pray'rs*

*To ask such high Felicity and Fame,  
As Heav'n has freely granted thee; yet this  
That seems so great, so glorious to thee now,  
Would look how low, how vile to thy great  
Mind,*

*If I could set before thy astonish'd Eyes,  
Th' Excess of Glory, and th' Excess of Bliss,  
That is prepar'd for thy expiring Soul  
When thou arriv'st at everlasting Day.*

*O could embodied Mind but comprehend  
The Glories of the Intellectual World,  
Or I the blissful Secret were allow'd,  
But Fate forbids, to Mortals to reveal:*

*O I could lay a Scene before thy Eyes  
Which would distract thee with transport-  
ing Joy,*

*Fire the rich Blood in thy illustrious Veins,  
Make ev'ry Nerve with fierce Convulsions  
start,*

*Blast all thy Spirits, and thy Life destroy;  
Thou could'st not taste th' Ecstatick Bliss  
and live.*

*As one who has liv'd thirty tedious Years,  
And ever since his wretched Birth been dark;  
His visual Orbs with cloudy Films o'ercast,  
And in the Dungeon of the Body dwelt  
In utter Ignorance of Nature's Works  
And Wonders of this vast material World,  
And has no Notion e'er conceiv'd of Light  
Or Colours, or the verdant flowry Earth,  
Or the stupendous Prospect of the Sky;  
If then he finds some Artist whose nice Hand  
Couches*

*Couches the Cataracts and clears his Eyes,  
And all at once a Flood of glorious Light,  
And this bright Temple of the Universe,  
The crystal Firmament, the blazing Sun,  
All the amazing Glories of the Heav'ns,  
All the Great Maker's high Magnificence  
Come rushing thro' his Eyes upon his Soul;  
He cannot bear th' astonishing Delight,  
But starts, exclaims, and stamps, and raves,  
and dies:*

*So the vast Glories of the upper World,  
If they were set before embodied Mind,  
Would oppress Nature and extinguish Life.*

These are the Verses, my most discerning Friend, that I thought might have been preferr'd to the foremention'd Couplet, especially since they would as it were have introduced themselves, whereas the Couplet is dragg'd in by extreme Violence. But I submit to your infallible Judgment, not in the least suspecting that my worthy Friend can have any Malice in this Affair, and insert that Couplet in his immortal Speculations only on purpose to expose me; no, far be it from me to entertain any such Jealousie of my dearest Friend, who is so good, so kind, so beneficent, and who has so often given himself the glorious Title of the Lover and Benefactor of Mankind. Who could imagine that one who hath



given himself that glorious Appellation, could e'er be prompted by Malice, or Passion, or Interest thus slyly and hypocritically to abuse one whom he had call'd his Friend?

I have been apt to believe likewise, my worthy Friend, that you would have been kinder to your self and to me, if instead of commending the foremention'd Couplet you had taken some notice of the following Verses which are in my Paraphrase upon the *Te Deum*; especially when you had so fair an occasion to mention them as you had at the writing the 119<sup>th</sup> *Tatler*. The Couplet of the translated Satyr was introduced by Violence: But how very naturally would the following Verses of the Paraphrase have been mention'd either before or after the last Paragraph of the foremention'd Paper, where a Spirit is introduc'd, who after he has spoke of that part of the Creation which is too little for human Sight, comes afterwards to speak of the immense Objects of Nature after this manner.

*I must acknowledge for my own Part, that altho' it is with much Delight that I see the Traces of Providence in these*  
*Tat. 119. Instances, I still see greater pleasure in considering the Works of the Creation in their Immensity, than in their Minute-*

*Minuteness. For this Reason, I rejoice when I strengthen my Sight so as to make it pierce into the most remote Spaces, and take a view of those Heavenly Bodies, which lye out of the reach of Human Eyes tho' assisted by Telescopes; what you look upon as one confus'd White in the milky way, appears to me a long Tract of Heav'ns, distinguish'd by Stars, that are ranged in proper Figures and Constellations: While you are admiring the Sky in a starry Night, I am entertain'd with a variety of Worlds and Suns plac'd one above another, and rising up to such an immense Distance that no created Eye can see an end of them.*

Upon the writing this Paragraph, how could you avoid the making mention of Verses which had the very same Ideas, and Verses which you had formerly mention'd with Applause in private Conversation? I know you will answer that you had intirely forgot them, and therefore I take the Liberty here to refresh your Memory. The Angels are introduc'd in that Paraphrase speaking to God, and saying, after other things, that which follows.

[*Eyes,*

*Where-e'er at utmost stretch we cast our  
Thro' the vast frightful Spaces of the Skies;  
Ev'n there we find thy Glory, there we gaze  
On thy bright Majesty's unbounded Blaze;*

*Ten*

*Ten thousand Suns, prodigious Globes of  
Light*

*At once in broad Dimensions strike our sight;  
Millions behind in the remoter Skies,  
Appear but Spangles to our wearied Eyes;  
And when our wearied Eyes want farther  
strength*

*To pierce the Void's immeasurable Length,  
Our vigorous tow'ring Thoughts still farther  
fly,*

*And still remoter flaming Worlds descry;  
But ev'n an Angel's comprehensive Thought  
Cannot extend so far as thou hast wrought,  
Our vast Conceptions are by swelling brought,  
Swallow'd and lost in Infinite to nought.*

How glad am I that the foremention'd Verses were writ before the above-nam'd *Tattlers*? Otherwise I should have been thought to have borrow'd from my worthy Friend, without making any manner of acknowledgment, only adding or endeavouring to add to what I borrow'd a little of that Spirit, and Elevation and Magnificence of Expression which the Greatness of the Hints requir'd.

'Tis for this Reason that I am glad the Verses were printed some Years before the Prose. For you know, my dear Friend, that a Plagiary in general is but a scandalous Creature, a sort of a spiritual Outlaw, and ought to be treated as such by all  
the



the Members of the Commonwealth of Learning. But a Plagiary from living Authors is most profligately impudent, and in so slow and splenatick a Nation as ours most unjust and barbarous. For among us any thing that is admirably good is twenty or thirty Years before it comes to be understood. And how infinitely base is it in the mean while to deprive an Author of any thing that is valuable in him, and to intercept his coming Praise? As Laws are made for the Security of Property, what pity 'tis that there are not some enacted for the Security of a Man's Thoughts and Inventions, which alone are properly his? For Land is alienable, and Treasure is transitory, and both must at one time or other pass from him, either by his own voluntary Act, or by the Violence and Injustice of others, or at least by Fate. And therefore nothing is truly and really a Man's own.

————— *Puncto quod mobilis Horæ*  
*Nunc prece, nunc precio, nunc vi, nunc sorte*  
*supremâ*  
*Permutet Dominos, & cedat in altera Jura.*

'Tis only a Man's Thoughts and Inventions that are properly his: being alone Things that can never be alienated from him, neither by Force nor Persuasion, nor by Fate it self; and tho' another may basely usurp  
the

the Honour of them, yet they must for ever rightfully belong to their first Inventor. Thus even the richest and the happiest of Men have nothing that is truly and really their own, but their Thoughts and Inventions. But Authors for the most part, and especially Poets, have nothing that can so much as be call'd their own but their Thoughts. 'Tis for those alone, and the Glory which they expect from those, that they entirely quit their Pretensions to Riches, and renounce the Poms and Vanities of this wicked World; and therefore to endeavour to deprive them of those is exceedingly inhuman. What a Joy 'tis to think that the Precedence of Times sets me free from the Imputation of this Injustice? Had I been capable of doing this, and doing it to my worthy Friend, of wronging my dearest Friend in this manner, who knows how far that Barbarity might have extended it self? I might have proceeded to have upbraided him with some weak place in his never-dying Folio's; and having forcibly depriv'd him of his Silver and his Gold, have pelted him with his Brass and his Copper, out of counterfeit Anger or pretended Scorn, because they were of no richer Metal.

But the Case of my dear Friend is vastly different. You have that Reputation, and the World has that Opinion of your Merit,  
that

that they will be so far from believing that you have Obligations to a living Author which you have not, that tho' you had really made thus bold with me, it would have been impossible to have convinc'd above forty or fifty People of it. And here, my dear Friend, at the same time that I acknowledge your uncommon Merit, I cannot but congratulate your incomparable Felicity, it being plain that you have got more Reputation in three Years time than *Milton* has done in fifty Years, or than *Shakespear* has in an hundred. I shall therefore judiciously conclude with the generality of your Readers, that you have a Merit paramount to that of all *British* Authors both living and dead, and that you have not only more Merit than any one Moralist either Ancient or Modern, but that if you continue your Paper three Years longer, you will have as much Merit as they have all together.

*I am, my dear Friend,*

*With great Respect and Fidelity,*

*Your, &c.*

*To*



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To Matthew Prior, *Esq*; upon  
the Roman Satirists.

S I R,

W Hen you seem'd to approve of the Translation of the seventh Satire of the second Book of *Horace*, which was translated by one of my Friends, that Approbation was the more pleasing to me, because it confirm'd me in my own Opinion of it, and oblig'd me to acquiesce in the Judgments which some of my Friends have given of it, whom I have always chiefly consulted in my Dôubts about poetical Matters. And now, Sir, I come according to my Promise to consult you about the Preference which several Partizans of the *Roman* Satirists have given to their respective Favourite Authors, and to know from you which of them are in the right, or rather whether they are not all in the wrong. You know very well, Sir, that *Rigaltius*, *Scaliger* the Elder, *Lipsius* and *Holiday* prefer *Juvenal* to *Horace* and *Persius*; That *Dacier*, *Heinsius*, *Monfieur de la Bruyere*, and several others, prefer *Horace*

to

to *Persius* and *Juvenal*; that Mr. *Dryden* endeavours to divide the Palm between *Horace* and *Juvenal*, and to prefer *Horace* for Instruction, and *Juvenal* for Delight; that he gives *Horace* the Preference for Instruction, because, says he, he is the more general Instructor; but that he gives the Priority to *Juvenal* for Delight, because he is most delighted with him, and so makes his own Taste the Argument for preferring him. But tho' we shou'd grant, Sir, that the Generality of Readers are more delighted with *Juvenal* than they are with *Horace*, because *Dryden* is more delighted with him; yet is it not very much to be question'd, whether the Author who gives the most general Delight is the most delightful Author? Now Sir, your old Friend Monsieur *Despreaux*, tho' 'tis evident that he was more pleas'd with *Horace* than he was with *Juvenal*, because he has imitated him more, yet he had more Judgment than expressly to prefer the one to the other, because he knew very well, that there can be no true Preference where there can be no just Comparison, and that there can be no just Comparison between Authors whose Works are not *ejusdem generis*, and that the Works of those two Satirists are not *ejusdem generis*. For do not you believe, Sir, that Mr. *Dryden* is in the wrong where he affirms that the Ro-

*man*

*man* Satire had its Accomplishment in *Juvenal*? For is there not Reason to believe that the true *Roman* Satire is of the Comick kind, and was an Imitation of the old *Athenian* Comedys, in which *Lucilius* first signaliz'd himself, and which was afterwards perfected by *Horace*, and that *Juvenal* afterwards started a new Satire which was of the Tragick kind? *Horace*, who wrote as *Lucilius* had done before him, in Imitation of the old Comedy, endeavours to correct the Follies and Errors, and epidemick Vices of his Readers, which is the Business of Comedy. *Juvenal* attacks the pernicious outrageous Passions and the abominable monstrous Crimes of several of his Contemporaries, or of those who liv'd in the Age before him, which is the Business of Tragedy, at least of imperfect Tragedy. *Horace* argues, insinuates, engages, rallies, smiles; *Juvenal* exclaims, apostrophizes, exaggerates, lashes, stabs. There is in *Horace* almost every where an agreeable Mixture of good Sense, and of true Pleasantry, so that he has every where the principal Qualities of an excellent Comick Poet. And there is almost every where in *Juvenal*, Anger, Indignation, Rage, Disdain, and the violent Emotions and vehement Style of Tragedy. Can there then be a just Comparison made between these two Satirists, any more than there can be between a Tragick and



and a Comick Poet? If Mr. *Dryden* were now living, would he compare *Nat Lee* with *Etherege*, the former of which never touch'd upon Comedy, and the other never attempted Tragedy? would he prefer *Nat Lee* to *Etherege*, as he does *Juvenal* to *Horace*, because the Thoughts of *Lee* are more elevated than those of *Etherege*, his Expressions more noble and more sonorous, his Verse more numerous, and his Words more sublime and lofty? would he not have believ'd, that if *Etherege* had writ *Sir Fopling* in the same Style, that *Nat Lee* wrote *Alexander*, he would have been as merry a Person as *Penkethman* was when he acted *Alexander*? Would he not in all probability have judg'd that *Lee* is more delightful to those who are more pleas'd with Tragedy than they are with Comedy, and that *Etherege* is more delightful to those who are better entertain'd with Comedy than they are with Tragedy? Now, Sir, ought not we to make the same Judgment of *Horace* and *Juvenal*, and to affirm *Horace* to be more delightful to those who are more pleas'd with Comedy than they are with Tragedy, and that *Juvenal* is more delightful to those who are better entertain'd with Tragedy than they are with Comedy? And that perhaps for that very reason he was more pleasing than

*Horace* to Mr. *Dryden*? Will not the Tragick Satire, which like Tragedy fetches its Notions from Philosophy and from common Sense, be in all probability more acceptable to Universities and Cloisters, and all those Recluse and Contemplative Men, who pass most of their time in their Closets, all which Persons are suppos'd to have Philosophy from Study, and common Sense from Nature? And will not the Comick Satirist, who owes no small Part of his Excellence to his Experience, that is to the Knowledge of the Conversation and Manners of the Men of the World, be in all likelihood more agreeable to the discerning Part of a Court, and a great Capital, where they are qualify'd to taste and discern his Beauties, by the same Experience which enabled their Authors to produce them? And above all things, must it not be most agreeable to a Polite Court where that dexterous Insinuation, that fine good Sense, and that true Pleasantry which are united in the *Horatian* Satire are the only shining Qualities which make the Courtier valuable and agreeable? And will he not take more delight in the *Horatian* Satire than in the Tragick Eloquence of *Juvenal*, not only because he is qualified by Nature and Experience to relish the Beauties of it, but because the Pleasure which he receives from it, is subser-

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vient to his Interest, which is always his main Design, and Improves and Cultivates those Talents which are chiefly to recommend him to those who are to advance him?

It will be needless, Sir, to detain you any longer, by enquiring into the Preference which *Casaubon* has so injudiciously given to *Persius* above *Horace* and *Juvenal*, or into the Preference which he particularly gives to the fifth Satire of *Persius* before this of *Horace*, the Translation of which has occasion'd the Trouble which I now give you, and which, you know, Sir, is writ upon the same Subject. Your Friend, Monsieur *Dacier*, tells us that *Casaubon* by this Opinion prefers the University to the Court. I appeal to you, Sir, if the Satire of *Horace*, the Translation of which comes after this Letter, does not speak for it self, and justify the Assertion of Monsieur *Dacier*.

*I am,*

*S I R,*

*Your, &c.*



Familiar, Moral and Criminal

in to his estate, which is always in  
in Debt, and Improvements and Controversies  
the Tithes which are chiefly to recom-  
and him to those who are to advance

it will be needed, Sir, to obtain, you  
by keeping, by enjoining upon the Par-  
the which I have had to mind, and  
to the other side, however, and I have  
on into the Preference which he par-  
tially give, to the fifth part of the  
the one of these, the Translation of  
it has occasioned the Trouble which  
now give you, and which, you know,  
is with upon the same Subject. Your  
honor, Sir, I am, Sir, as that  
of this Opinion, prefers the Law  
to the Court. I repeat to you, Sir,  
the State of Affairs, the Translation of  
which comes after this Court, does not  
work for it, and implies the Affirmation  
of the Law.

I am, Sir, your humble Servant,

J. J. J.

1720

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# HORACE.

LIB. II. SAT. VII.

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# H O R A C E

## LIB. II. SAT. VII.

**J** Amdudum ausculto, & cupiens tibi dice  
servus

*Pauca, reformido. Davusne? ita Davus, am  
cum*

*Mancipium domino, & frugi, quod sit satis: hoc e*

*Ut vitale putes. age, libertate Decembri,*

*(Quando ita majores voluerunt) utere: narra.*

*Pars hominum vitiis gaudet constanter, & urge*

*Propositum, pars multa natat, modò recta cape  
sens,*

*Interdum pravis obnoxia. saepe notatus*



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# H O R A C E.

## BOOK II. SAT. VII.

DAVUS and HORACE.

I'VE listen'd long, and now wou'd Silence break,  
If your poor timerous Slave had leave to speak.

*What, Davus, is it thou?* The very fame;

And, if the truest Services may claim

The just Return of a kind Master's Care,

Methinks that I of yours deserve a Share.

*Why then, since ancient Custom has ordain'd*

*Thy Tongue at this time should be unrestrain'd,*

*Of this Saturnian Feast th' Advantage take,*

*And what thou would'st deliver, freely speak.*

Part of Mankind on Vice are firmly bent,

Their constant Pleasure and their sole Intent;

While a large part are fluctuating still,

And now inclin'd to Good, and now inclin'd to Ill.

*Cum tribus annellis, modò levâ Priscus inani,*

*Vixit inaequalis: clavum ut mutaret in horas,*

*Aedibus ex magnis subitò se conderet, unde*

*Mundior exiret vix libertinus honesté.*

*Jam mæchus Romæ, jam mallet doctus Athenis*

*Vivere, Vertumnis, quotquot sunt, natus iniqui*

*Scurra Volanerijs, postquam illi justa chiragra*

*Contudit articulos, qui pro se tolleret, atque*

*Mitteret in pyrgum talos, -mercede diurnâ*

*Conductum pavit. quanto constantior idem*

*In vitiis, tanto leviùs miser, ac prior ille,*

*Qui jam contento, jam laxo fune laborat.*

*Non dices bodie, quorsum hæc tam putida tendun*

*Eurcifer? ad te, inquam. quo pacto, pessime? laud*

*Fortunam & mores antiquæ plebis; & idem*

For such Inconstancy was *Priscus* known,  
Twice in an Hour he chang'd his darling Gown,  
To-day three Rings he wears, to-morrow none;  
From his own pompous Palace oft he stole,  
And to some lurking Place so vile wou'd strole,  
Ev'n cleanly Slaves wou'd scorn the nasty Hole.  
One Day, he wishes it may be his Doom,  
To pass his Life in Lewdness and in *Rome*;  
The next, that *Athens*, Virtue's learned Seat,  
May prove his Quiet and his last Retreat:  
From Object thus to Object would he range,  
As if possess'd by all the Gods of Change.

*Volnerius*, justly lam'd in both his Hands,  
Keeps one in Pay, that at his Elbow stands,  
Merely to throw the gouty Gamester's Dice;  
So persevering is he in his Vice.

Less wretched thus, in constantly pursuing  
An obvious, certain, but a pleasing Ruin,  
Than t'other struggling with strong Inclination,  
And sure to shock his Reason or his Passion.

*Sirrah*, what's all this Stuff? to what Intent?  
And what's by all these musty Morals meant?

As musty, Sir, as you are pleas'd to find 'em,  
Ev'n for your Worship's Service I design'd 'em.

*How so, you Dog?* Our Ancients, Sir, you praise,  
Their temperate Life, their plain, their frugal ways;  
When



*Si quis ad illa Deus subito te agat, usque recuses,  
 Aut quia non sentis, quod clamas, rectius esse;  
 Aut quia non firmus rectum defendis, & hæres,  
 Nequicquam cæno cupiens evellere plantam.  
 Romæ rus optas, absentem rusticus urbem  
 Tollis ad astra levis. si nusquam es fortè vocatus  
 Ad cœnam, laudas securum olus; ac, velut usquam  
 Vinctus eas, ita te felicem dicis, amâsque,  
 Quod nusquam tibi sit potandum. Fusserit ad se  
 Mæcenâs serum sub lumina prima venire  
 Convivam; nemôn' oleum feret ocyûs? ecquis  
 Audit? cum magno blateras clamore, furisque.  
 Milvius et scurræ tibi non referenda precati  
 Discedunt. etenim fateor me, dixerit ille,  
 Duci ventre levem: nasum nidore supinor:*

Imbe-

When in an instant, should some Pow'r Divine  
Pronounce aloud, That Antique Life be thine,  
You wou'd refuse the Grant, nor have the Heart  
From your dear, darling Vices e'er to part;  
Either because you feel not what you speak,  
Or else your Mind's inconstant still and weak:  
Thus while one Foot you labour to retire,  
Your other plunges deeper in the Mire.

When you're in *Rome*, you're all on fire to prove  
The Solitary Pleasures of your Grove;  
But scarce you're to your Country Seat got down,  
When to the Skies y' extol the absent Town.

If uninvited and at home you eat,  
How quiet is the Morfel, and how sweet!  
And you so pleas'd, that one wou'd surely think,  
Abroad unwillingly you eat or drink;  
But let *Mæcenæ* send for you next Day,  
How eager you the Summons to obey!  
Who's there? who waits? where are my Raskals  
all?

What ho! my Effence: frantickly you bawl;  
When with light Bellies and with heavy Heart  
Your spunging Scoundrels, cursing you, depart.

I grant that I my Belly love full well;  
That each good Dish allures me by the Smell;

That

*Imbecillus, iners; si quid vis, adde, popino.*

*Tu cum sis, quod ego, & fortassis nequior, ultro*

*Insectere velut melior, verbisque decoris*

*Obvolvas vitium? quid, si me stultior ipse*

*Quingentis emto drachmis deprenderis? aufer*

*Me vultu terrere; manum, stomachumque teneto,*

*Dum, quæ Crispini docuit me janitor, edo.*

*Te conjux aliena capit, meretricula Davum.*

*Peccat uter nostrum cruce dignius? acris ubi me.*

*Natura incendit, sub clarâ nuda lucernâ*

*Quaecunque excepit turgentis verbera cauda,*

*Clunibus aut agitavit equum lasciva supinum,*

*Dimit-*



That indolent and idle, and a Sot,  
I'm hardly driven to forsake my Pot;  
But yet that you who still are worse sometimes,  
Tho' specious Words may colour o'er your Crimes,  
That You should reprimand me ev'ry Hour,  
Only because you have me in your Pow'r,  
When this poor Slave, whom for ten Pounds you  
bought,

Better and wiser too perhaps is thought——

Nay, against all Resentment I declare;  
Both Frowns and Blows and angry Words I bar;  
While what I learnt from my Converse of late  
With *Crispin's* Porter, I shall now relate.

No less, forsooth, than some fine marry'd Dame  
Can raise your Fancy and provoke your Flame;  
While honest *Davus*, humble as he's poor,  
Pretends no higher than his little Whore.  
If then the Case stands thus between us two,  
Am I the greater Criminal or you?

When Nature keen incites Love's fierce Desires,  
To some convenient Place to quench those Fires,  
Forthwith, defying Scandal, I repair,  
And some kind she, whom Lust has painted fair,  
I take, and in her loose, commodious Dress,  
The willing, wanton Baggage I caress;

But

*Dimittit neque famosum, neque sollicitum, ne  
Ditior, aut formæ melioris meiat eodem.*

*Tu cùm projectis insignibus, annulo equestri,  
Romanoque habitu, prodis ex judice Dama*

*Turpis, odoratum caput obscurante lacernâ;*

*Non es, quod simulas? metuens induceris, atque  
Altercante libidinibus tremis ossa pavore.*

*Quid refert, uri virgis, ferroque necari*

*Auctoratus eas; an turpi clausus in arcâ,*

*Quò te demisit peccati conscia herilis*

*Contractum genibus tangas caput? éstne marito*

*Matronæ peccantis in ambos justa potestas?*

*In corruptorem vel justior? illa tamen se*

*Non habitu, mutatve loco, peccatve supernè,*

*Cùm te formidet mulier, neque credit amanti.*

But after having well my self diverted,  
I'm in no Pain, for being soon deserted,  
Nor care if, when my present Pastime's over,  
Her next a finer be, or richer Lover.

When you aside your Marks of Honour fling,  
Your *Roman* Robe and your *Equestrian* Ring;  
When you, whom *Cæsar* made a Judge so grave,  
Sulk, in the filthy Habit of a Slave,

To blind some Cuckold, and his Wife t'obtain;  
Are you not really what you think you feign?

Trembling you're introduc'd, tho' all on fire,  
Fear in your Breast conflicting with Desire;  
What Gladiator, hack'd and hew'd all o'er  
For wretched Sustenance, can suffer more?  
Witness, when Neck and Heels together prest,  
You're cram'd for Refuge in some nasty Chest.

Is not Revenge the Injur'd Husband's Due,  
Both on the Wife and her Corrupter too?  
What Favour can the latter hope or claim,  
Industrious to offend—Not so the Dame.

She ne'er steals out to meet you in Disguise,  
Nor to your active Ardor e'er replies,  
But dully passive in your Arms she lies.

Not but she'd meet you with an equal Gust,  
If to your amorous Vows she dar'd to trust,  
Nor fear'd you'd scorn her for her rampant Lust.

Yet



*Ibis sub furcam prudens, dominóque furenti  
Committes rem omnem, & vitam, & cum corpore  
famam.*

*Evásti? credo metues, doctúsque cavebis.*

*Queres, quando iterum paveas, iterúmque perire*

*Possis, ó toties servus! quæ bellua ruptis,*

*Cùm semel effugit, reddit se prava catenis?*

*Non sum mæchus, ais. neque ego hercule fur, ubi vasa*

*Prætereo sapiens argentea. tolle periculum,*

*Jam vaga profiliet frenis natura remotis.*

*Túne mihi dominus, rerum imperiis hominúmque*

*Tot tantisque minor; quem ter vindicta quatérque*

*Imposita haud unquam miserâ formidine privet?*

*Adde suprâ dictis, quod non leviùs valeat. nam*

*Sive vicarius est, qui servo paret, uti mos*

*Vester*

Yet on to Bondage willingly you go,  
Round your own Neck the galling Yoke you throw,  
While to your Cuckold, in his raging Fit,  
Your Honour, Life and Fortune you commit.  
Have you escap'd? 'Tis hop'd, that Danger past,  
May teach you Caution and more Wit at last,  
No—still you long your former Risques to run,  
And fresh Occasions seek to be undone.  
Oh, Slave confirm'd! who can so often fall  
Into repeated Bonds, and willing Thrall!  
What Beast's so stupid, when he breaks his Chain,  
As ever to return to it again?

You're no Aldult'rer—Right—No Thief am I;  
Your Plate I pass with vast Discretion by,  
But set the legal Penalties aside,  
And Nature breaks thro' all Restraints beside.

You can I justly then my Master call,  
You, whom so many Lusts and Men enthrall,  
Whom shou'd the Prætor's Wand strike thrice,  
or more,  
Your native Freedom it cou'd ne'er restore,  
And ne'er expel the Fear that tyranniz'd before?

As one, who to Commands Obedience pays,  
Which some Superior Slave upon him lays,  
For such a Custom here I find you have)  
Calls that Superior still his Fellow Slave;

*Vester ait, seu conservus; tibi quid sum ego? nempe  
Tu, mihi qui imperitas, aliis servis miser, atque  
Duceris, ut nervis alienis mobile lignum.*

*Quisnam igitur liber? sapiens, sibi que imperiosus:  
Quem neque pauperis, neque mors, neque vincula  
terrent:*

*Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores  
Fortis, & in seipso totus teres, atque rotundus;  
Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari:  
In quem manca ruit semper fortuna. potesne  
Ex his, ut proprium, quid noscere? quinque talenta  
Poscit te mulier, vexat, foribusque repulsum  
Perfundit gelidâ. rursus vocat. eripe turpi  
Colla iugo: liber, liber sum, dic age. non quis.  
Urget enim dominus mentem non lenis, & acres  
Subjectat lasso stimulos, versatque negantem.*



So since you still unactive are alone,  
 And move by Springs, like Puppets, not your own;  
 Since your mad Passions rule both you and me,  
 Pray what but wretched Fellow Slaves are we?  
*At this Rate who is free?* The wise Man's free;  
 That Sovereign of his Mind, 'tis only he  
 Who can be said t'enjoy true Liberty;  
 Who spight of Death, of Poverty and Chains,  
 And Pleasures, o'er himself serenely reigns;  
 Who stands collected in himself, and whole,  
 A Match for all the Tyrants of the Soul;  
 Who scorning Titles, of himself is great,  
 Of Fortune independant and of Fate.

This is the Picture of the Man that's free;  
 Now here what Feature of your own do' you see?  
 Your costly Whore, who has your Weakness found,  
 Presses and plagues you for a thousand Pound:  
 Refus'd, in Rage she turns you out of Doors,  
 And a salt Show'r upon your Head she pours.  
 Yet when she calls again, you're at her beck.—  
 From this vile Yoke, for Shame, withdraw your  
 Neck;

Come, say *I'm Free*—Alas! you have no Pow'r  
 To quit the Tyrant Passion, that each Hour  
 Subjects your Mind, and will no Mercy show,  
 But spurs you tir'd and jaded as you go.

Or

*Vel cùm Pausiatâ torpes, insane, tabellâ,  
 Quî peccas minùs, atque ego, cùm Fulvî, Rutubæ.  
 que,*

*Aut Placideiani contento poplite miror*

*Prælia rubricâ picta aut carbone: velut si*

*Re verâ pugnent; feriant, vitentque moventes*

*Arma viri. nequam, & cessator Davus: at ipse  
 Subtilis veterum iudex, & callidus audis.*

*Nil ego, si ducor libo fumante. tibi ingens*

*Virtus, atque animus cœnis responsat opimis.*

*Obsequium ventris mihi perniciosus est: cur?*

*Tergo plector enim; quî tu impunitior, illa,*

*Quæ parvo sumi nequeunt, opsonia captas?*

*Nempe inamarescunt epulæ sinè fine petitiæ,*

*Illusique pedes vitiosum ferre recusant*

*Corpus. an hic peccat, sub noctem qui puer uvam*

*Furtivâ mutat strigili? qui prædia vendit,*

*Nil servile gulæ parens habet? adde, quodd idem*

Non

Or when in foolish Rapture long you stand,  
 Admiring some fam'd Piece of *Pausia's* Hand,  
 How is your Conduct less a Fault than mine,  
 When gaping at some brawny Fencer's Sign,  
 Bungl'd in Chalk or Coal, I think it fine?

And lag a while to view the painted Show,  
 And how they seem to give and ward the Blow

*Davus* however is the loit'ring Ass,  
 While for a plaguy Judge of Art you pass.

If I'm provok'd by a hot smeking Pye  
 To Demolition, what a Rogue am I?

While you, the Man of Virtue and high Mind,  
 Disdain the Dishes of the nicest kind.

For my good Cheer you'll say I dearly pay,  
 Since with my Back my Belly I defray.

But can you draw a just Conclusion hence,  
 That you're luxurious at a less Expence?

When choicest Viands in Excesses cloy,

And endlessly debauching, you destroy,

That Strength, that should your faultring Limbs  
 supply,

Which now to bear your pamper'd Corps deny.

If the young liquorish Rogue, who swaps for  
 Trash

The Toys he stole, most justly feels the Lash;

Shall he escape the Scourge, who, to supply

His Luxury, makes Lands and Lordships fly?



*Non horam tecum esse potes; non otia rectè.*

*Ponere: téque ipsum vitas fugitivus & erro;*

*Jam vino quærens, jam somno fallere curam.*

*Frustra: nam comes atra premit, sequiturque fugacem.*

*Unde mihi lapidem? quorsum est opus? unde sagittas?*

*Aut insanit homo, aut versus facit. ocyùs hinc te*

*Ni rapis; accedes opera agro nona Sabino.*

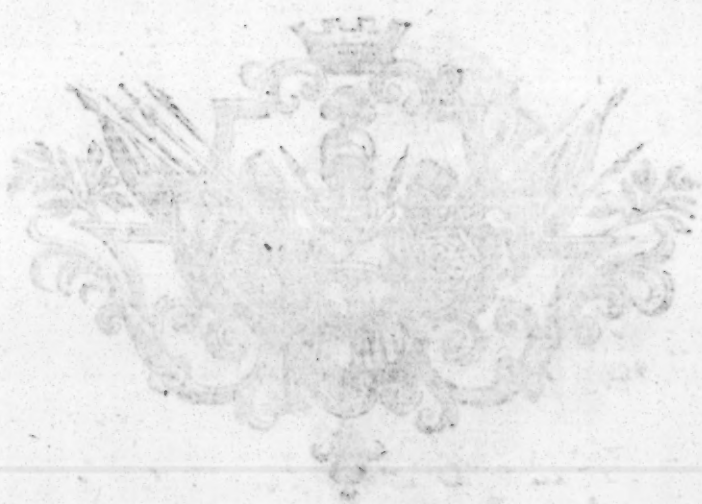


Now add to what I've said, you want the Pow'r  
 T'endure your self alone one single Hour,  
 You want the Pow'r your Leisure to enjoy,  
 But ev'ry precious Moment misemploy.  
 Still from your self a Fugitive you run,  
 And seek by Wine and Sleep your Care to shun,  
 Care on its dusky Wings pursues its Prey,  
 Or lies in Ambuscade upon your way,  
 Haunts you by Night and ruffles you by Day.

*Oh that a Stone— Oh that a Dart I had!*  
 The Man is raving sure or rhiming mad.  
*Sirrah, this Moment vanish from my Sight.*  
*For if thou dost not urge thy speedy Flight,*  
*To my Plantation, Wretch, thou goest once more,*  
*T' encrease the Number I've sent there before.*



Now add to what I've said, you want the Pow'r  
 To endure your self alone one single Hour,  
 You want the Pow'r your Lailie to enjoy,  
 But every precious Moment misemploy,  
 Still from your self a fugitive you are,  
 And seek by Wine and Sleep your Care to lose,  
 Care on its dusky Wings pursues her way,  
 Ours in Ambuscade upon your way,  
 Hunts you by Night and rushes you by Day,  
 Obstat a stone — O that a Dart I had!  
 The Man is rav'ning like a thining mad,  
 Alas, this Moment vanishes from my sight,  
 For if thou dost not urge thy speedy flight,  
 To my Plantation, Wretch, thou goest once more,  
 To catch the Number I've sent there before.





To Mr. GREENWOOD.

S I R,

THIS Morning, in order to perform my Promise, I caus'd two Parcels to be put into the General Penny-Post-Office for you, in one of which was *The Invader of his Countrey*, and in the other, the four Letters to Sir *John Edgar*; I hope both Parcels will come safe to your Hands, and wish they may entertain you.

Since I have been in Town, I have consider'd the Passage in *Phædrus*, *Sed hoc feretis pro Judicio premium*. I find that *Virgil* and *Horace* have us'd the Word *Judicium* in three or four several Senses. They have both us'd it for the intellectual Faculty, which we call Judgment. *Horace* has us'd it in this Sense in his Art of Poetry; as in this Passage

*Tu nihil invitâ dicas faciesve Minervâ  
Id tibi judicium est, ea mens.*

And in the Epistle to *Augustus*, speaking of *Alexander the Great*,

Quod

— *Quod si  
Judicium subtile videndis artibus illud  
Ad Libros et ad hæc. Musarum dona vocares*

*Virgil* has us'd it in his fifth *Eclogue* for Opinion;

*Judicio nostro tantum tibi cedit Amyntas.*

In the first *Epistle* of the first Book, *Horace* uses *Judiciis* for Opinions.

*Quod si me populus Romanus forte rogat, cur  
Non, ut porticibus, sic Judiciis fruor iisdem;  
Nec sequar, aut fugiam, quæ diligit ipse vel  
odit,  
Olim quod vulpes, &c.*

*Horace* in the first *Satire* of the second Book uses it for a Prosecution or a Tryal at Law:

*Si mala condiderit in quemquis carmine, jus  
est  
Judiciumque*

And in the fourth *Satire* of the first Book,

— *Admiror quo pacto Judicium illud  
Fugerit.*

But lastly, *Judicium* is sometimes taken for a definitive Sentence, as

— *manet*

—manet altâ mente repostum  
*Judicium Paridis.*

Now as Penalty or Punishment is the consequence of an antecedent Sentence, and no Figure is more commonly us'd either by Poets or Orators, than the Effect for the Cause, or the Consequence for the Antecedent; *Phædrus* in the Passage in Question uses the word *Judicium* for Punishment; as he uses *Premium* to signifie *Pœnam*, and so the Sense of the above-cited Verse is, *But this shall be your Punishment according to the Sentence pronounc'd against you.* And thus much to the Passage of *Phædrus*.

I design to come as soon as the Weather is settled, and to pass two or three Days at the House where I breakfasted yesterday Morning; but I shall hardly care to make a longer Stay among so many Jacobites, a Sort of People whom I so much abhor, and who so much hate me. I can compare them, for Malice, Credulity and Obstinacy, to no Sort of People so nearly as to the *Jews*, who have been so many Years in a foolish Expectation of that Messiah who is already come. But of all the Jacobites I detest none so much as the Jacobite Parsons, and of all the Parsons none so much as those who are for dethroning a Prince to whom they have taken an Oath to be Loyal, and for setting up a Pretender whom they have sworn



sworn to renounce. I have a great deal more Regard, or more Charity at least, for the Nonjurors among them, I mean that Part of them who live modestly and humbly in Retirement, and never meddle with the Government. These People seem to refuse the Oaths thro' Conscience, but a Conscience erroneous and ill-guided. But as for that Part of the Nonjurors who make it the constant Business of their Lives, to plot, to cabal, to set the People against their King, and one Part of the People against the other, they are apparently Nonjurors thro' Interest and not Conscience; they refuse the Oaths thro' the Hope of another Restoration, and the Gain that may attend it: It being impossible that any thing so uncharitable and immoral as their Practice, can be the Effect of a Christian Conscience. Yet ev'n these are nothing near so wicked as the swearing Jacobite Parsons. What I said of *Dr. Faustus*, if you took it rightly, was design'd against them; for the Person who lives in constant, repeated, daily Perjury upon the account of Interest, seems to me to be capable of any Villany whatsoever, and to have done in effect what some credulous Persons believe that *Dr. Faustus* did formerly, that is, to have given Bond and Judgment to the Devil to surrender their Persons to him after a Term of Time.

*I am, Sir, Yours, &c.*

To Sir Richard Blackmore.

S I R,

I Have lately, with a great deal of Satisfaction, read twice over the political Letters to the Author of the *London Journal*. Several of them seem to come from no ordinary Hands, being writ with great Strength and Spirit. The great Occasion certainly call'd for all the Strength and Spirit that could be supplied by Man. 'Tis indeed so extraordinary, that it has no Parallel in any Nation or any Age: For that a great Number of the chief Inhabitants of the Metropolis of a powerful Kingdom, who were so far from having any Cause of Discontent, that they had in their Power all the Felicity that Mortals can enjoy; that they actually possess'd more than ever they dar'd to hope for, nay more than ever they dar'd to wish for, ev'n in their most sanguine Hours, but a few Months before; That Persons who were esteemed by all their Fellow-Citizens, respected by all their Fellow-Subjects, regarded and highly favour'd by the Government, and honour'd

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and distinguish'd by the whole Legislature; that a Number of these should enter into an execrable Conspiracy, irretrievably to ruin their Fellow-Subjects, to distress the Government that had so highly favour'd them, and to afflict and perplex the whole Legislature that had so highly honour'd them; and all this only thro' the infinitely base and foolish Desire of accumulating Riches, of which they had before more than they could ever use, is what has never been transmitted to us by Tradition, or read of in ancient or modern History.

This Conspiracy, so new and unheard-of that it cannot be equal'd by any Nation in any Age, must necessarily have a Cause as monstrous and as unparallel'd; and that is an antecedent Conspiracy among a great number of People, some by conversing and by writing, and some by encouraging these Conversations and Writings, to overthrow the Religion of their native Countrey, and by that means to let in Corruption upon us like a Deluge. And this they have endeavour'd with all their Might to do, upon a Pretence the most extravagant that was ever heard of, upon a Pretence to advance the Publick Good. For their Design was to overthrow the Christian Religion, in order to destroy Priestcraft; at the same Time they make no Offer to establish any other Religion in the Room of that which they



they would destroy. Now Priestcraft may trouble and perplex a State, but a general Want of Religion must be attended with its utter Ruin. For the Religion of every Countrey in which the Natives and their Forefathers have been educated, and which is antecedent or coæval to most of its Laws and Customs, that Religion, whether true or false, is certainly the Basis of that Countrey's Constitution; and may indeed, when Corruptions flow in upon it, be reform'd, and reduc'd to its first Principles; but can never be totally abolish'd, without unavoidable Ruin. For that national Religion is, to that Countrey, the only Fountain both of general publick and private Virtue, and of general publick Spirit; and that being abolish'd, or very much weaken'd, even natural Religion must lose its Force, and consequently there can be no general Morality. For tho' our Antichristian Authors may make several of their Readers Atheists, they can never hope to make the Generality of a Nation Theists, without pretending to infuse more Understanding into them than God and Nature ordain'd for them. For the Bulk of Mankind in any Nation, that is the Peasants, the Mechanicks, and the Rabble of Gentry, are not capable of Theism, that is of worshipping, without a sensible visible Mediator, a Spirit who fills infinite Space; or of being convinc'd of their Duty by Arguments form'd by right.

right Reason, and drawn from the Laws of Nature. The Bulk of Mankind are entirely sway'd by their Passions, and especially by those two pow'rful ones, Hope, and Fear, for which Reason all those fam'd Politicians, who have had the greatest Knowledge of Mankind, have advis'd the Rulers of Nations to govern them by those two Passions, viz. by the Hope of Reward, and by the Fear of Punishment; and here I cannot forbear reciting the memorable Words of the great Cardinal Richlieu. He begins the first Chapter of the second Part of his political Testament thus:

*'Tis a common but true Saying, and therefore the more true, because it has been always in the Mouths and Minds of all Mankind, that Punishment and Reward are the two most important things to be observ'd in the Government of any State.*

*Nay 'tis most certain, that tho' no other Maxim should be made use of in the Government of States, than that of being inflexible in chastising those who deserve them, and religious in recompensing those who procure for them any considerable Advantage, they could not be ill govern'd; there being no Man whatever who is not capable of being kept within the Bounds of his Duty by Fear and by Hope*

*'Tis after the same manner that Religion works upon the Minds of Men. The Religion*

ligion of the Old Testament speaks strongly to these two Passions, proposing mighty temporal Rewards to those who observe the Rules of it, and to those who transgress them grievous temporal Punishments. The Religion of the New Testament speaks much more pow'rfully to them, by causing Men to hope for everlasting Happiness, and dread eternal Misery.

Now when the Generality of Mankind break loose from that Hope and that Fear, they remain absolutely without Religion, and are prepar'd to dissemble themselves of any that may gratify their Ambition, their Interest, or their Revenge; which was the Cause that in the two or three last Years of Queen *Anne*, so many cry'd out that they had rather turn Papists than be Presbyterians. Now by declaring that they had rather be of a Religion which differs from us in Fundamentals, than of one which agrees with us in Doctrine, they seem'd to renounce all Christianity.

'Tis for this Reason that some Persons, who are call'd Whigs, by writing and encouraging Antichristian Books have shewn themselves to be only nominal Whigs, but really and effectually Tories; for by endeavouring to root out the Christian Religion in general from the Minds of Men, and by leaving them consequently at Liberty to profess themselves of any Branch of it for

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their Intereſt; they have for thirty Years together been making their utmoſt Efforts for the bringing back Popery, Slavery and the Pretender; becauſe during all that long Space of Time, they have been endeavouring, with all their Strength, and with all their Might, to remove the moſt invincible Obſtacle to their Return.

Conſonant to all that has been ſaid above, is what *Machiavel* has declar'd in *Chap. 12. Lib. 1.* of his Diſcourſes on *Livy*. He tells us in the Beginning of that Chapter, *That all States, whether Kingdoms or Republicks, which would keep themſelves from Ruin, ought above all things whatever to preſerve the Ceremonies of their Religion uncorrupted, and maintain it always venerable; for there is no greater Sign, ſays he, of a Country's going to Ruin, than to ſee in it the Contempt of divine Worſhip.* And a little lower he adds, *for this Reason the chief Magiſtrates of a Kingdom or Commonwealth ought to maintain the Grounds of the Religion they hold, and this being done, they ſhall eaſily keep their Commonwealth religious and conſequently virtuous and united.* Which is a juſt and wiſe Obſervation of that ſam'd Politician; for Faction, which naturally tends to the Diſſolution of Governments, and even of the Conſtitutions of States, proceeds for the moſt part from a violent Deſire of poſſeſſing the publick Offices, that

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Desire from Necessity, and that Necessity from Luxury, and Luxury and all manner of Vice and Corruption from a Decay of the publick Religion.

I have many things more to say to you upon this Occasion. But having already transgress'd the usual Bounds of a Letter, I shall reserve the rest to another Opportunity, which I hope shortly to have. In what I have to say, as well as in what I have said, I shall declare my Sentiments, not as a Bigot, but as a faithful Lover of my Country. There is no Man alive who is less a Friend to Priestcraft than my self, or to the temporal ambitious Designs of Priests: But I shall never endeavour to destroy Religion in order to hurt Priestcraft: I know the Balance of right Reason better, and am amaz'd at the Conduct of some Statesmen, who to shew themselves forsooth notable Metaphysicians, prove to all Men of common Sense, that they are very damn'd Politicians; for as has been said above, tho' Priestcraft may disturb a State, a general Decay of the publick Religion must utterly destroy it. And 'tis for this Reason that, in the tenth Chapter of the first Book of his Discourses, *Machiavel* has these remarkable Words: *Infamous are they, and execrable, who are the Perverters of Religion, the Overthrowers of Kingdoms and Commonwealths, &c.*

*I am, S I R, &c.*

TO

Sir RICHARD BLACKMORE.

S I R,

THE Approbation which you gave to my former, encourages me to proceed. I affirmed in that, that the Religion of every Country, the establish'd ancient Religion, is the Basis of the Constitution of that Country. I make no doubt but that if any Religion except the *Mahometan* were established in *Turkey*, that absolute Monarchy would be speedily ruin'd. That mighty Empire will certainly decay, as the Influence of the *Mahometan* Religion grows weaker. But what is here affirm'd of Kingdoms and States in general, may be said more particularly of Free States. Their Liberty and their Greatness equally depend upon the Influence of the Religion established in them. When once the various Sects of Philosophers at *Athens* had generally weaken'd the Influence which the *Græcian* Religion before had had on the Minds of the *Athenians*, they were no longer that brave and  
that



that noble People who fought for the common Liberty of Greece at *Salamis* and at *Marathon*: They were no longer that great People who were all on fire with the Thirst of Glory, and were fonder of Liberty than of Life; the sordid Love of Gold took the Place in their Souls of those two noble Passions. And they who in the Days of *Miltiades* and *Themistocles* scorn'd to submit to the most formidable Power on Earth, as soon as their Philosophy had got the better of their Religion were ready to submit and betray their Countrey to a petty upstart Invader. If we look among the *Romans*, we shall find still more illustrious Proofs of the Influence that Religion has upon the Publick Welfare. *Machiavel* attributes all the Felicity of that State to the Religion established among them by *Numa*, who finding, says *Machiavel*, a very fierce People, and being desirous to reduce them to civil Obedience by peaceable ways, applied himself to Religion, as a thing wholly necessary to preserve civil Society, and ordered it in such a manner, that for many Ages there was not such a Fear of God as in that Commonwealth, which facilitated much any Enterprize whatsoever, which either the Senate or those brave Roman Courages did undertake. *Disc. on Livy. Lib. 1. ch. 11.* And a little lower in the same Chapter he adds, *If a Man considers well the Roman History,*

he shall find of how much Efficacy their Religion was for the commanding of Armies, for the reconciling the Senate and People, for the preserving good Men, and for mortifying the lewd. So that if we were to dispute to which of the two Princes Rome was more oblig'd, to Romulus or Numa, I believe Numa would be preferred; for where Religion is, military Discipline is easily introduced; and where they have no Religion and are already warlike, this hardly follows.

The Authority of *Machiavel* is so very great in political Matters, that I cannot forbear the quoting him once more in this very Chapter, who a little lower has these Words; *Wherefore having well consider'd all, I conclude, that the Religion introduced by Numa, was one of the principal Occasions of that City's Happiness, for that caus'd good Orders, good Orders brought good Fortune, and all the happy Successes of their Enterprizes; and as the Observance of Divine Worship occasions the Greatness of a Commonwealth, so the Contempt of it destroys it. For where the Fear of God is wanting, it must needs be that either that Kingdom goes to Ruine, or that it be supported by the Awe it stands in of the Prince, who may supply the Defects of Religion; and because Princes are but short-liv'd, that*  
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*Kingdom must needs have an End quickly, according as the Virtue thereof fails.*

But now, Sir, if the Religion which *Numa* establish'd among the *Romans*, was the principal Cause of the Felicity of that Commonwealth, I desire to know whether any thing which had a direct and natural Tendency to the weakening and overturning that Religion, had not as direct and natural a Tendency to the weakening and destroying the Commonwealth. There are particularly three things in the *Roman* Religion, which seem to me to have had a peculiar Influence upon the Happiness of that Commonwealth. The first is, the pretended Apparition of *Romulus* to *Proculus*, when he informed him of his Apotheosis, and assur'd him, if his *Romans* applied themselves to Arms, they should become the Masters of the Universe. Now as you know very well, Sir, that the *Romans* firmly believ'd this, what cou'd infuse more Confidence and Spirit into them in their Battels than that Belief?

But, Sir, you know very well, that the second thing which had a peculiar Influence upon the Felicity of the *Roman* Republick, was their Divinations by the Flight of Birds, the Entrails of Beasts, and the pecking of Chickens, &c. *The Soothsayings*, says *Machiavel*, Ch. the 1st. Lib. the 1st. of his Discourses, *were not only for*



the most part (as we have before observ'd) the Ground of the ancient Pagan Religion, but they were also the Occasion of the Roman Republick's Welfare. For which Reason the Romans had more Regard to them than to any Order besides, and made use of them in their Consular Assemblies, in the Beginnings of their Enterprises, in drawing forth their Armies into the Field, in fighting of pitch'd Battels, and in any other important Action either Civil or Military. Nor ever would they undertake any Expedition till they had first assur'd the Soldiers that the Gods had promis'd them the Victory. For, says he, at the end of this same Chapter, speaking of the Divination by the pecking of Chickens, there was no other end of this manner of Soothsaying than to encourage the Soldiers to fight, for Boldness always wins the Victory.

But, Sir, a third thing which more than any thing had an Influence upon the Felicity of that Commonwealth was what we find in the *Somnium Scipionis* of Cicero. *Sed, quo sis, Africane, alacrior ad tutandam Rempublicam, sic habeto: Omnibus qui patriam conservaverint, adjuverint, auxerint, certum esse in cælo ac de finitum Locum, ubi beati, ævo sempiterno fruantur.* Is it not probable, Sir, that most of their great Actions proceeded from a Belief of this, or else that some of them were downright Fanati-

Fanaticism? We find by *Dionysius Hallicarnassæus*, that the Belief of this was the chief Motive that determined *Vetturia*, the Mother of *Coriolanus*, to endeavour, among so many discouraging Circumstances, to prevail upon her Son to draw off his Army from the Walls of *Rome*, and not to destroy his Country.

*If I carry back to Rome, says she to her Son, the hope of a speedy Peace, if I return to it with the Assurance that you are reconciled to it, with what Transports of Joy shall I not be receiv'd by our Fellow Citizens? The small Remainder of time which I am destin'd by the Gods to pass upon Earth, will be attended with unparalleled Glory. And when the Gods put an end to my Life, my Happiness will have no end. And if it be true, that there are different Mansions doom'd for us after we are dead, I shall have no Reason to fear those dark and dismal Places prepared for the Souls of the wicked; even the Elisian Fields, those charming Retreats destin'd for the Souls of the Just, will be too poor a Recompence to reward Desert like mine. After I shall have preserved Rome, this City so dear to Jupiter, I shall be encourag'd to expect a Place in that pure and sublime Region of the Air, which, we are told, is inhabited by the Children of Gods.*

These,

These, Sir, were the three Points of the *Roman* Religion, which had the greatest Influence on the Publick Success and the Prosperity of their Commonwealth. But when at length the *Gracian* Philosophy was brought into *Italy*, and the *Romans* began to think, what the Moderns call freely, *the System of Epicurus*, which most prevailed with the Men of Letters and the Men of Vanity, appear'd to be directly levell'd at the three foremention'd Points of their Religion, and to have a direct Tendency to the rooting the Belief of them from the Minds of Men. For whereas the fundamental Maxim of *Epicurus's System* is, that the Gods never in the least concern themselves about the Affairs of the World, they who receive it, must refuse all Credit to the Apparition of *Romulus* to *Proculus*, after the former's pretended Apotheosis. And whereas 'tis a Maxim of *Epicurus*, that the World is absolutely govern'd by Chance, and that the very Pretence to Divination is nothing but a solemn Foppery; this alone was sufficient to destroy the Influence of their Aruspicy and their Augury. And then, how is the Expectation of a blissful and a glorious distinguish'd Immortality, consistent with that third *Epicurean* Maxim, that the Soul dies with the Body?

Thus, Sir, did the Free-thinking of the *Romans* weaken their Belief of those Points  
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of their Religion, which were the three principal Sources of their Virtue and their Magnanimity, and fatally prepar'd the way for unheard-of Luxury and all manner of Vice and Corruption. I know very well indeed that this Luxury and this Corruption is attributed by their Historians to their *Asiatick* Triumphs, and that fatal Security into which they were lull'd by the Destruction of *Carthage*. But let us consider the Words which one of them uses upon that Occasion. 'Tis *Velleius Paterculus* in the beginning of his second Book. *Potentia Romanorum prior Scipio viam aperuerat, Luxuria posterior aperuit. Quippe remoto Carthaginis metu, sublatâque imperii emulâ, non gradu, sed præcipiti cursu, a virtute Descitum, ad vitia Transcursum; vetus Disciplina deserta, nova inducta; in somnum a vigiliis, ab armis ad voluptates, a negotiis in otium conversa civitas.*

You see, Sir, that the Historian here observes, that upon the Destruction of *Carthage*, the *Romans* did not pass gradually from Virtue to Vice, but took a Headlong Leap from the former to the latter. Now if 'tis truly said of particular Persons, that *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*, as I make no doubt but that it is very true, 'tis certainly more unquestionably true of a whole and a great People. If therefore the *Romans* upon the Destruction of *Carthage*, precipitately

pitately broke out into all manner of Vice and Corruption; there is no way in Nature to account for this but by truly affirming, that their Inclinations were debauch'd long before the Destruction of *Carthage*, and that the Ruin of that Rival City did nothing but take off that Restraint which had been upon them before; that their Principles of Religion and Virtue had been attack'd and weaken'd for a whole Century before, by the loose Philosophy of *Greece*, which had been introduced among them about the beginning of the *Carthaginian War*.

I could bring Instances from several other Kingdoms and States to shew the Influence which Religion has upon their good or their evil Fortune. But enough has been said upon a Subject of which the reasonable part of Mankind is satisfied, and especially all the great Men who have lived in every Age. For all the great Legislators who have been famous among the Nations for the wise Laws they established, have either been really religious, or have pretended to be so. *For never, says Machiavel, was there any Maker of extraordinary Laws in a Nation, who had not his Recourse to God, for otherwise his Laws had not been received. For several things that are good and expedient are known to a wise Man, which have not such Evidence in them-*

themselves, that he by Discourse can easily make others conceive them. Therefore, says he, the wise Men who would get over this Difficulty, have Recourse to a God, so had Lycurgus, so Solon, so many others whose Design was the same with theirs. All the great Founders of Kingdoms and States have been either really or appearingly religious. And therefore as Empire is maintain'd by the same Methods by which it was at first establish'd, there is no Precept that *Machiavel* instills with so much Care into the Prince of his Formation, as that he should at least appear religious; as any one may be satisfied, who has Recourse to the 13<sup>th</sup> Chapter of his Prince. All the Conquerors of the World have brought about their Designs by Religion. Ev'n *Cæsar* himself, tho' a manifest *Epicurean*, pretended to be of divine Extraction, and in order to animate his Souldiers by that Belief, the very Word which he gave at the decisive Battel of *Pbarsalia* was *Venus Victrix*.

But as the Legislators, and Founders, and Conquerors of Empires have had Recourse to Religion for the establishing or encreasing their Empire; all the wise establish'd Princes that have ever reign'd, and all the great Ministers who have serv'd them, have thought Religion necessary for the preserving that Empire which had been at first establish'd by it.

Cardinal



Cardinal Richlieu in the beginning of the sixth Chapter of the first Part of his Political Testament, addresses himself thus to Lewis the 13th.

*Dieu etant le Principe des toutes choses, le Souverain Maître des Rois, et celuy seul qui les fait regner heureusement, si la Devotion D. V. M. n'estoit connue de tout la Monde; je commencerois ce chapitre qui concerne sa Personne, en lui representant, que si elle ne suit les voluntés de son Createur, et ne se soumet a ses voix; elle ne doit point esperer de faire observer les siennes, ni de voir ses Sujets obeissans a ses Ordres.*

And thus, Sir, have I endeavour'd to shew that the respective Religion of ev'ry Country is the Basis of the Constitution of that Countrey, which as I have endeavour'd to prove by Reason in the former Letter, I have pretended to confirm it in this by infallible Experience and Matter of Fact, by the Authority of *Machiavel*, who is generally regarded as the Prince of Political Writers; by the Sentiments of wise Legislators, of the great Founders of Empires and great Conquerors; by the Practice of all wise establish'd Princes, and the Sentiments and Practice of all

all the great Ministers, who have serv'd them. There is no manner of Occasion to tell a Gentleman of your good Sense, that by Religion, all along in these Letters, is meant not only reveal'd Religion, but the Religion established in every Country: But I thought fit to give at least a Hint of this for the Sake of others, into whose Hands this Letter may come.

And now, Sir, what shall we say of a certain Sett of Persons, who for these last thirty Years have made it the sole Business of their Lives, not only to shew all the World that they are irreligious themselves, and vainly value themselves upon it, but to endeavour to root out the establish'd Religion from the Minds of others; and at the same Time to pretend that they do this for the publick Good, and to strengthen the Revolution; which such a Proceeding has a natural Tendency to destroy, as we shew'd in our former Letter. Some of these are the very Persons who cry out with the greatest Vehemence against those who have been guilty of that deplorable Corruption, and that fatal Villany, which have almost undone a great and powerful Nation. And yet I pretend to shew in a third Letter that that prodigious Villany  
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and Corruption is the necessary Consequence of their own Conversations and Writings, and the natural Effect of their undermining the Christian Religion.

Feb. 28. 1720.

*I am, S I R, &c.*



TO



TO

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE.

S I R,

I Asserted in my two former Letters, that the establish'd Religion in ev'ry Country, is the Basis of the Constitution of that Country, and the Fountain of publick Morality. And I endeavour'd to prove that Assertion by Reason, by the Authority of the most allow'd Political Writers, and by constant Experience, and matter of Fact. I promis'd to shew in this third Letter, that the frequent Attacks that have been made for these lost forty Years upon the Christian Religion by Atheists, and Deists, have been the Cause of the present national Calamity, which is like to prove so fatal to us; in order to which give me leave to

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observe that as the establish'd Religion in every Country is the Basis of the Constitution of that Country, so no Religion that ever was in the World ever made it so much its Design as the Christian Religion does, to extirpate Avarice and all worldly Interest out of the Minds of Men. The Founder of this Religion has more than once declared that his Kingdom is not of this World, and that they who will be his Subjects, whose Hearts and Affections he absolutely requires, must renounce the Prince of this World, and ev'ry thing that is his; and he has taken the utmost Care both by his Example, and by his Doctrine, to banish Avarice and all worldly Interest from the Minds of his Followers; for which Reason, his whole Life was one continu'd Example of a contented and willing Poverty. *The Foxes have Holes, says he, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head. Matthew Chap. 8. V. 20.* He made this his principal Care in his Doctrine, and establish'd his Religion upon this Foundation. *Mat. 14. Chap. 14. V. 21. Jesus said unto him, if thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast, and give to the Poor; and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven, and*  
come

*come and follow me.* And when the young Man, to whom this was said, went away sorrowful, because he had great Possessions; *Jesus* said, *Ibid.* V. 26. *It is easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God.* That is, It is easier for a Camel to go thro' the Eye of a Needle, than for a Man who loves the Riches of this World to become a Subject of such a Sovereign of another World, as requires all his Affections.

The Apostles by their Lives gave the same Example that their Master did. *Matthew* 19. V. 23. *Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee.* As they gave the same Example, they preach'd the same Doctrine. *St. Paul* has declar'd Avarice to be Idolatry, that is, 'tis setting those Affections upon sordid Dirt, whose rightful Object is God alone. As the End of the Christian Religion is to restore Man to that blissful Immortality, from which the Fall degraded him; this can be done no other way than by restoring those Affections to God, which Man at his Fall withdrew from his Creator, and fix'd upon the Creature. And therefore the whole Tenour of the Christian Religion, the whole Spirit and Soul



Soul of it, declare this End aloud. The three Cardinal Virtues of this Religion are utterly incompatible with Avarice and Worldly-mindedness. 'Tis impossible but that any one who has a lively Faith, and a lively Hope in the Promise of a blissful Immortality, must set his Affections on things above, and not on things below; and as for the greatest of the three Virtues Charity, that and Avarice must be the very Contradictions of each other, in their Natures, their Designs, their Effects, and their very Terms.

I believe, Sir, that it is pretty plain, that where a Religion thus constituted flourishes, it must be attended with great Disinterestedness and with publick Virtue. When upon the Resurrection of *Jesus Christ* it was in its full Power, we read of the greatest Disinterestedness that ever was heard of, *Acts* the 4th. And ev'n here among us when it was reduc'd to its first Principles upon the Reformation, there was a good deal of publick Virtue and publick Spirit, and there never has been so little publick Spirit among us, as since the Return of King *Charles* the Second, and never so fierce and frequent Attacks against the Christian Religion; and as those Attacks have been more frequent and more audacious within these last thirty Years, the national Virtue and publick Spirit

Spirit have declin'd proportionably, and Avarice and Corruption increas'd. And now they are arriv'd at their fatal Height, we find that they who are believ'd to be most guilty of them, are they who have been the great and the constant Favourers of those who made the Attacks.

But now, Sir, as I have shewn that the undermining the Christian Religion has had a natural Tendency to the weakning the national Virtue and the distressing the Government; what Acknowledgments shall we make to you who have been for so many Years a Champion for the establish'd Religion, and who by endeavouring all that lay in your single Power to stemm this Torrent of impolitick Impiety, have like a true Patriot been employ'd in the Service of your Country, and making a generous Effort for the restoring publick Virtue and publick Spirit. And as one of the noblest Branches of the publick Worship, by the Disadvantage of a barbarous Translation, lay but too much expos'd to the Scorn and Contempt of Libertines; you have bravely rescu'd it from that Oppression; and by giving us a new Translation confin'd to the old Tunes and Measures, (a Translation valuable to the Knowing, and intelligible to the Ignorant) have put it in our Power to establish an Uniformity of Praise in our Worship, as we have done of Prayer.

Prayer. Whereas at present, one Parish differing from another in Psalmody, the Sojourner and the Traveller, when they occasionally come into our Churches, are but too often excluded from joyning in the most sublime Branch of our Worship. For Prayer is too often a poor self-interested thing in Comparison of Praise. For Prayer is too often the Effect of Fear and of a mean Opinion of the Deity, sometimes supposing him to be mutable, and sometimes unjust. But Praise proceeds from nobler Motives, and from nobler Passions; from a ravishing View of his Excellence, from Gratitude, from Admiration, from Joy divine and from Seraphick Love. Thus, Sir, have I sent you a simple Sketch of what I intended to say upon this Subject. For the Spirits will tire as well as the Limbs, and mine are already weary.

*I am,*

*S I R,*

*Your, &c.*



*F I N I S.*



